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HENRY ABELOVE

Labor in Search of New Directions
ROBERT KUTTNER

Paradoxes of Blackness—Intellectuals in Debate
MARTIN KILSON

"Americanization" & the Early CIO
GARY GERSTLE

The Politics of Black South Africa
JOSEPH SCHWARTZ

The Disciple, a Sketch
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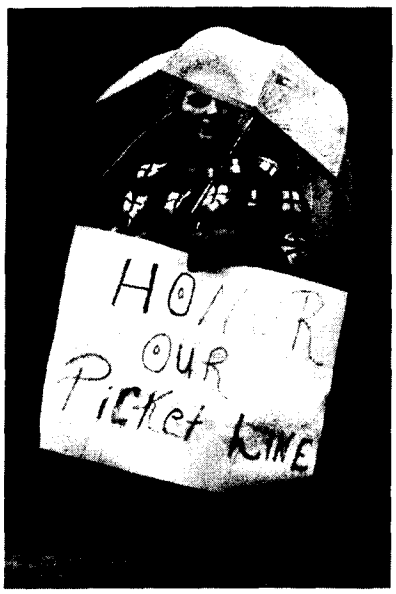

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COMMENTS AND OPINIONS

5
Joseph Schwartz . . . David Bromwich . . . Jim Sleeper
Thomas Edsall . . . Michael Harrington . . . Jan Jósef Lipski

ARTICLES

24
A DISCIPLE *by Primo Levi*

27
SHOAH *by Leon Wieseltier . . . Abraham Brumberg*

33
UNIONS, ECONOMIC POWER, AND THE STATE *by Robert Kuttner*

45
WAR IN TUG RIVER VALLEY: A LONG AND BITTER MINERS' STRIKE *by Nicolaus Mills*

53
REMEMBERING THE SPANISH REVOLUTION *by Lewis Coser*

59
FREUD, MALE HOMOSEXUALITY, AND THE AMERICANS *by Henry Abelove*

70
PARADOXES OF BLACKNESS: NOTES ON THE CRISIS OF BLACK INTELLECTUALS *by Martin Kilson*

79
THE "RUSSIAN QUESTION"—IN THE 19TH CENTURY *by Shlomo Avineri*

84
THE POLITICS OF PATRIOTISM: AMERICANIZATION AND THE FORMATION OF THE CIO *by Gary Gerstle*

93
TOWARD A BRAVE NEW WORKPLACE? *by Robert Howard*

NOTEBOOK

102
by Samuel Hux . . . Harvey Klehr . . . Israel Kugler

MOVIES

109
RAMBO, PASSION, AND POWER *by Charles Molesworth*

BOOKS

112
REVIEWS by Jeff Faux . . . Sharif Arani . . . Maurice Isserman
Jim Sleeper . . . Gordon Beadle

LETTERS

123

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Joseph M. Schwartz

Black Politics in South Africa

I. The Level of Mass Resistance

The massive resistance to apartheid in South Africa shows few, if any, signs of abating. From the state of emergency declaration of July 20, 1985 (exempting all security forces from legal responsibility for acts of brutality) until mid-October approximately 250 people were killed, 1,500 injured, and 3,800 arrested (with over 2,000 still in detention). The government has not been able, despite heavy repressive measures, to quell the unrest. There may, perhaps, come a lull, but it will be followed by still larger waves of protest.

In 1960, three months after the Sharpeville massacre when the authorities had detained 11,000 individuals, relative calm returned to the townships. But the present upheaval is not Sharpeville 1960. Rapid industrial development since that time has doubled the black urban population, from 35 percent of total urban residents to over 50 percent. The small black trade union movement of the 1950s (of 50,000 members) had been crushed before Sharpeville. Today the ranks of independent black trade unions have swelled from 150,000 after their qualified legalization in 1979 to close to 750,000. Though the national leadership of the broad nonracial antiapartheid coalition, the United Democratic Front (UDF), has been detained, its decentralized structure seems to generate new leadership daily. And two consecutive generations of grade- and high-school students have been radicalized by the South African Student Organization (which provided the core leadership of the Soweto uprisings, and was banned in 1977) and by the Congress of South African Students (a UDF affiliate, banned last September).

Much of the Western press has failed to note that the current state of resistance has been going on for nearly three years. The new period of mass resistance began with opposition to the Black Local Authorities Act of 1982 (which supposedly devolved powers for operating basic services—such as electricity, roads, fire and police duties—to local elected town councils). In reality, however, this law curtailed Pretoria's financial support for the satellite urban townships, rendering them "autonomous" from the wealthy, urban white authorities. The most lucrative source of local revenues—home rents—remains in the hands of the central white authorities, while sales of alcohol, property levies, fines, and utility charges are now to pay for local services.

Resistance in the black townships grew beyond proportions that state authorities, and initially the black political activists, could have envisioned. What began as a boycott of the November–December 1982 Local Authority elections (Pretoria claims a 21 percent turnout, while the United Democratic Front claims that under 10 percent participated) mushroomed into general resistance to the apartheid regime. The threats and violence visited upon local town councillors have led over 90 percent of them to resign. The rest now live under permanent government protection. Of the 38 local councils created under the act, only two are still functioning.

Almost simultaneously, the trade union and student movements witnessed massive rejuvenation. In 1979 the government's Wiehan Commission recommended the legalization of independent black trade unions as a way of controlling a plethora of wildcat strikes. Legalization was accompanied by legislation severely limiting the right to strike (strikers can still be fired and strike votes can only be taken after lengthy cooling-off periods).

The government hoped that legalization would prevent the wave of aggressive and political trade-union organizing that immediately followed. By the

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summer of 1985 over 700,000 black South African workers (close to half of the black industrial work force) had joined one of the major independent black trade unions. (The two most significant confederations are the nonracial 250,000-strong Federation of South African Trade Unions [FOSATU] and the 180,000-strong Council of Unions of South Africa [CUSA], which originated mainly in the Black Consciousness wing of the resistance).

In early September 1984 the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) led the first legal black strike in South African history. After negotiations were deadlocked, the Chamber of Mines (the owners' consortium) called for a government-conducted strike vote, believing that with a threat of job dismissals the union leadership could not win a strike authorization. Instead, more than 40,000 workers voted to walk off their jobs and after a militant two-week strike (in which 10 miners were killed fighting police and scabs), the miners won a settlement that was three percentage points higher than the original Chamber of Mines' offer. The failure of last September's miners' walkout has been cited in much of the American press as a sign of weakness in the black trade union movement; but the blow to the movement can easily be exaggerated. With the threat of a strike, the NUM had already won a 16–22 percent wage increase at the Anglo-American Corp. and other leading mining companies.

Pressed by union militants, Cyril Ramaphosa, president of the NUM (and head of CUSA), reluctantly called for a walkout at two mines owned by Gemcor and Anglovaal, the two most intransigent antiunion employers. Though the union had few members at these mines, it succeeded in getting approximately 30,000 of the 60,000 workers to walk off their jobs—but severe police and company repression forced Ramaphosa to call off the strike after three days. He then decided to challenge in the courts the government's provision allowing employers to fire striking workers. Overall, the trade union movement now is stronger than ever, and last November's merger of FOSATU and seven independent unions will produce a union federation of over 400,000 members organized on an industrial basis, which will curtail the jurisdictional competition that has sometimes plagued this rapidly growing movement.

The most noteworthy political resistance consisted of a series of general strikes (community, school, and labor boycotts) that broke out in September and November 1984 and March 1985 in the Transvaal and the Eastern Cape. On November 4–5, 1984, the Transvaal Stayaway Committee called a two-day job and school boycott. The demands were many and varied—the strikers protested, among other things, against increases of rents, property taxes, and utility rates. The message was clear: open declaration of war against apartheid. The response was massive, with over three-quarters of a million workers and students staying out and demonstrating in the streets. The government responded by killing scores of demonstrators, and by arresting 379 people in a one-day sweep of the black townships ringing Johannesburg. On March 21, 1985, the 25th anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre, the police killed 43 unarmed funeral attendees in Langa township on the Eastern Cape.

In all, from August 1984 to mid-October 1985 over 1,000, mostly unarmed black South Africans have been killed by the police. Yet such violence has not daunted a resurgent student movement; during the past academic year an average of 300,000 secondary-school students were participating in political strikes at any given moment. In early September 1985 the regime closed over 460 schools that serve 300,000 predominantly "colored" students (of mixed race) in Capetown. With massive unemployment (over 50 percent) confronting black and "colored" school-leavers, the struggle for freedom is more appealing than the struggle for achievement in a school system controlled by the white authorities.

II. The United Democratic Front: Rise of a Mass Movement

THE MOST HOPEFUL SIGN in the recent wave of unrest is the emergence of the United Democratic Front (the UDF) as a broad nonracial coalition ("multiracial" in South Africa, in contrast, connotes the apartheid policy of recognizing the "separateness" of each race). The UDF was formed to resist the constitutional "reforms" of August 1983. The "reforms" called for the establishment of a tricameral parliament in which a "colored" and an "Indian" chamber would each be granted some administrative powers in its community. (The South African government legally refers to people of mixed race as "colored.") The UDF contended that this divided the nonwhite oppressed communities of South Africa. In response to the UDF's call for a boycott of the August 1984 elections for the two new chambers, only 18 percent of the "colored" and 15 percent of the Indian electorate participated. This, in turn, gave rise to a national resistance movement broader than any since the Afri-

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can National Congress (ANC) was forced underground in 1960.

The UDF consists of a loose coalition of 600 community, religious, student, and trade union organizations that represent 2 million South Africans of all races. The government has continually arrested and harassed its leadership. (Last June a trial began of 24 of its national leaders, charged with high treason, and another 150 have been arrested since the beginning of the emergency.) And yet, so far, because of its decentralized, coalitional nature, the UDF has been able to weather the repression. Although the UDF denies formal ties to the ANC (such admission would immediately lead to its banning), its advocacy of a nonracial South Africa governed on the basis of one-person one-vote reminds all South Africans of the ANC's Freedom Charter of 1955.

Almost every casket buried at the mass political funerals (which by now over a million black South Africans have attended) is draped with the banned ANC's black, green, and gold colors. Foreign press accounts note continually the mass singing of the ANC anthem *Nkosi Sikel'i-Afrika* ("God Bless Africa") and chants in praise of its armed wing *Umkhonto we Sizwe* ("Spear of the Nation").

The repressive capacities of the South African state cannot be underestimated. How long the opposition can maintain an unrelenting policy of noncooperation remains to be seen. And there are the political tensions between the UDF and the smaller, but militant, Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO), which have led to some violent internecine disputes. AZAPO (and the somewhat broader coalition it initiated, the National Forum) is the spiritual offspring of the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) and a wing of the Black Consciousness movement (in exile many Black Consciousness veterans moved closer to the nonracial ANC, which they had criticized in the mid-1970s).

These organizations argued in the 1960s and '70s for a black-only mode of organization, contending that progressive whites should fight racism in the white community rather than usurp leadership roles in the African struggle. The UDF–AZAPO split became evident to American journalists when AZAPO denounced the UDF-supported visit of Senator Ted Kennedy early last year as "an imperialist plot." Bishop Tutu held a meeting with both AZAPO and UDF leaders last May and organized a jointly sponsored anniversary celebration of the Soweto uprising on June 16. By summer, however, most observers believed that the UDF had emerged as the politically dominant factor in the townships.

III. Scenarios for Transition: The State of White Politics

ALTHOUGH THE REGIME'S REPRESSIVE CAPACITY is by no means exhausted, it is questionable whether anything short of mass slaughter can quell the unrest. And, with the South African debt crisis rendering it vulnerable to international pressure, there are some external limits on the regime's ability to bare its iron fist.

By openly calling for negotiations with the ANC, and sending seven of its leading representatives to Zambia to meet with Oliver Tambo, the ANC's exiled president, South Africa's corporate leadership has registered its no-confidence vote in the Botha regime, and made clear that, indeed, it can no longer tolerate so high a level of instability. When Chase Manhattan refused to roll over short-term loans in July '85 the panic began, with international banks refusing to renew $2 billion in short-term loans. (Over $12 billion of South Africa's $22 billion in international debt comes due within the next 18 months.) The rand plummeted from 50 to 35 cents (it was valued at $1.20 in December 1983). In response, the government closed the foreign and stock exchanges for four working days (August 27 to September 2) and announced a four-month moratorium on foreign-debt repayments.

The (Nationalist-party) Botha government, of course, is unwilling to negotiate its own dissolution, no matter how gradual. Whether the white liberal community—as embodied in the Progressive Federal party (PFP)—and its business allies are capable of advancing a program that might garner the support of credible representatives of the black majority is also problematic.

The "reform program" of the *verligte* (Afrikaans for "enlightened") wing of the Nationalist party has no chance of gaining such acceptance. President Botha outlined this program in his speech last September 30 at the Cape provincial Nationalist party conference. "My party and I are committed to the principle of a united South Africa," proclaimed Botha. "One citizenship and a universal franchise." But this franchise would be exercised in federated or confederated "units" based on geography and race. President Botha made clear his view that a universal franchise in a unitary state would mean the end to "a civilized South Africa."

Many white liberal critics of the regime—such as Sheila Duncan, president of Black Sash (a white women's organization that aids pass-law victims) and PFP leader Helen Suzman—stated that realization of the government commission's recommendation of September 11, 1985 that the pass laws be

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abolished would, in Suzman's words, "mean the beginning of the end of apartheid." But the black struggle is mainly concerned with the democratization of political and economic power—not merely with the restoration of that minimal human right, the freedom of movement.*

Botha made clear what the "free movement" of the government report would mean. Workers who hold permanent jobs in the urban industrial sector might be granted permanent-resident status, along with their families (many of whom currently reside in the Bantustans). But after this integration of industrial labor into the modern sector, all surplus labor would be relegated to the destitute Bantustans. The economic essence of the apartheid labor system would remain in place. Botha also explicitly stated that his party's commitment to "security for each group" would mean the continuation of segregated schools, housing, and "culture in the general meaning of the word."

The chasm between the *verligte* wing of the Nationalist party and the demands of the democratic movement would be less distressing but for the reality that the Nationalist party still commands the allegiance of a majority of the white population (and by no means just the Afrikaner population. While the liberal PFP, which gained 19 percent of the vote in the last election, is the official opposition party, the right-wing Conservative party (a Nationalist split-off that favors partition) and the hard-line *Herstigte Nationale* party of rural Afrikanerdom together commanded over 20 percent of the white vote in recent polls.

Even more distressing is that the Progressive Federal party (PFP) has never endorsed the principle of one-person one-vote in a unitary state, or supported the redistributive welfare state outlined in the ANC Freedom Charter of 1955. While the PFP has campaigned courageously in favor of greater civil liberties (abolition of the pass laws and the homelands policy), it has not advanced policies that would begin to deal with the economic misery of the black population—whose median income is one-eighth that of whites, and half of whom are forced to live in the Bantustans, areas as impoverished as those of the poorest nations of sub-Saharan Africa. (According to the World Health Organization, the majority of children born in the Bantustans die before the age of six.)

The one nonnegotiable demand of the ANC has always been that South Africa should be nonracial, unfragmented, and governed according to a system of majority rule and universal suffrage. In order to help alleviate the extreme maldistribution of wealth and employment opportunities, the Freedom Charter envisions the nationalization of the few monopolies and mining companies that control over half of South Africa's industrial assets. Small wonder that Gavin Relly, chairman of the Anglo-American Corp., the country's largest mining conglomerate (and one of the monopolies the Freedom Charter slated for nationalization), stated after his meeting with Oliver Tambo that, while he and Mr. Tambo hoped to build a South Africa in which both their children could grow up free, "There is little community of interest between us. Our positions are very far apart."

The basic stalemate between the black movement and even the most liberal sector in mainstream South African white politics concerns the concept of a unitary national government elected by one-person one-vote. In the abstract, partition and federal arrangements that devolve significant powers to different regions and racial groups sound attractive. In the absence, however, of a unified national government with the power to reshape the South African political economy, such a solution would only yield "apartheid with a human face." There are no relatively separate black and white South African political economies. Urbanization and industrialization have not only severely eroded the tribal identity to which rural-based chieftains such as Gatsha Buthelezi appeal; they also necessitate that black and white must govern together, if they are to live as equals.

IV. Inkatha and "Tribalism"

THE ARGUMENTS FOR FEDERALISM rest on claims that South African blacks are tribally divided between Zulu (6 million), Xhosa (5 million), Tswana (2.1 million), Northern Sotho (2 million), Southern Sotho (1.6 million), Shangaan, Swazi, Venda, and other small tribes. This argument ignores studies by Martin West, an anthropologist at the University of Capetown, which demonstrate that urbanization and industrialization have radically eroded tribal loyalties. National black identity is paramount to most black South Africans, even those in the homelands. Besides, the Zulu, Xhosa, and Swazi languages are closely related, mutually intelligible, and collectively called Nguni—and the majority of urban blacks speak fluent English.

The other standard part of the argument, re-

* The pass laws require that all blacks over the age of 16 carry a pass stating their legal place of residence and employment. The system separates many male workers from their families and forces "open surplus" population—the elderly and unemployed—to live in the barren Bantustan.

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cently made in a *New Republic* editorial in favor of partition, is that the Zulu people have "all the characteristics of nationhood," as evidenced by their loyalty to Chief Gatsha Buthelezi and his Inkatha movement. Recent violence between Inkatha and UDF supporters in Durban proves little, as almost all blacks in the Durban area are Zulus. But what of Buthelezi's strength among the rural residents of his Kwazulu homeland? It is difficult to measure Inkatha's voluntary membership statistics, as all Kwazulu state employees and teachers are required to join Inkatha. The South African government's claim that there are 1 million members is not taken seriously by anyone. In October 1982 Buthelezi claimed 350,000 members; just three months later he claimed membership had grown to 750,000.

Undoubtedly, Buthelezi has some mass support in the rural areas of Kwazulu. But his popularity has clearly declined after his 1980 open break with the ANC and with the recent wave of Inkatha attacks on UDF supporters. While South African polls are not the most reliable, a recent Gallup poll commissioned by the *Sunday Times* of London raises serious doubts about Buthelezi's popularity, both in Kwazulu and among South African blacks in general (25 percent of whom are Zulu). Residents of Kwazulu (excluding Zulu urban residents of Durban, who are likely to be more sympathetic to the ANC and UDF) were asked whom they would favor as president of a free South Africa. The three leading candidates were Nelson Mandela with 50 percent, Chief Buthelezi with 27 percent, and Bishop Tutu with 12 percent. When the same question was put to a representative national sample of urban and rural blacks, the results were Mandela 50 percent, Tutu 24, and Buthelezi only 6. Helen Suzman drew 11 percent of the vote, further refuting the view that rampant tribalism characterizes the overall political attitudes of South African blacks.

V. Resurgence of the African National Congress

A LEADING SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOLAR of the ANC, Professor Thomas Lodge of the University of Witwatersrand, asserts that today the ANC "has succeeded in reestablishing itself as the center of gravity in black politics within South Africa." In the 1970s many would have reacted skeptically to assertions that the ANC would once again become the dominant political force in black South African politics. The ANC suffered tremendously from the mass arrests and exiling of its leadership following its outlawing after Sharpeville. As an organization that had operated legally, nonviolently, and aboveground from 1912 to 1960, it was ill-prepared for the clandestine activity forced upon it. After the treason trial of 1964 those few ANC leaders, such as Tambo, who had been sent abroad spent most of their time seeking diplomatic and financial support overseas. The political lull was broken in the early 1970s by the spontaneous strikes of nearly 100,000 workers in the Durban area in 1973 and the emergence of a "Black Consciousness" movement of African, "colored," and Indian students who emphasized "psychological liberation" and black empowerment as the initial step toward liberation. Rejecting the ANC's tradition of nonracial organizing, the Black Consciousness movement explicitly excluded whites from its organizing efforts. Initially, ANC exile publications rejected the "racialism" of the Black Consciousness movement, and the ANC's allies in the small, exiled Communist party denounced it as a "petty-bourgeois deviation."

The ANC also did not have a leading role in the trade-union organizing of the late '70s and '80s. The origins of the two largest South African union federations did not render them initially attractive to the ANC. The Council of South African Unions was founded by unions who favored an all-black membership and wished to limit the role of hired white staff in internal union matters. The Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU), which is strongly nonracial and syndicalist in orientation, focused on building strength at the shop-floor level and on avoiding affiliation with any political party.

No love was lost between CUSA, FOSATU, and the ANC when the ANC-affiliated South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), which had largely lost its rank-and-file base after 1960, tried to block the development of FOSATU's and CUSA's international trade-union contacts. For those who see Communist-party domination (despite its small membership and its repression) at every level of the South African freedom struggle, it is worth noting that CUSA chose to affiliate with the International Federation of Free Trade Unions (and *not* the Moscow-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions). In 1981 FOSATU sent a delegation to Austria asking the leaders of Solidarnösc to warn their exiled, industrially skilled membership against accepting South African government offers to emigrate there. Solidarnösc's exiled leadership cooperated, initiating a close working relationship between some FOSATU leaders and exiled Solidarnösc activists.

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The exile of thousands of black South African student activists to the front-line states,* after the banning of all Black Consciousness organizations in October 1977, provided the ANC with its first influx of potential guerrilla recruits. Returning to its nondoctrinaire nationalist roots, it successfully recruited key leaders of the Black Consciousness movement, exiled Durban and Eastern Cape independent trade-union activists, and even Chief Sabata Dalindyebo, the main opponent of the dictatorial leader of the nominally independent Transkei homeland, Chief Kaiser Mantanzima (Nelson Mandela's cousin).

By early 1980, the training of a new generation of exiled activists began to yield results in sophisticated sabotage attacks. By 1983, according to Joseph Lelyveld of the *New York Times*, the stunning attacks on the SASOL coal-gasification plants, the Koeberg nuclear power plant, and the Air Force headquarters in downtown Johannesburg had immensely increased the prestige of the ANC among South African blacks. Only in June '85, at its second congress-in-exile (the first was held in 1969), did the ANC announce it no longer would guarantee that its attacks on economic and military targets would not result in innocent deaths. "We will confront the armed police and the soldiers and anyone else identified with the police or soldiers," Tambo stated; "but we will not go onto a football field and explode a bomb to kill players or into a cinema."

At the founding meeting of the UDF on August 20-21, 1983, the ANC had clearly reasserted its presence in South African politics. Though much broader based and decentralized than the ANC,the UDF's three co-presidents (all now in jail) are veteran ANC activists Oscar Mpetha, Archie

* Zambia, Tanzania, Angola, Mozambique, and Botswana—the states on the "front-line" borders of South Africa—are also in the front line of the struggle against its pro-apartheid regime.

A Brief Guide to South Africa's Mass Organizations & Political Groupings

NONRACIAL LIBERATION & POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS

ANC (African National Congress) — oldest, most significant liberation movement. Founded in 1912, engaged strictly in nonviolent protest until its outlawing in 1960. Underground presence has grown significantly in past eight years. Its imprisoned leader Nelson Mandela is the country's most popular black political figure. ANC calls for a nonracial South Africa, governed by one-person, one-vote majority rule in a unitary welfare state with a mixed economy.

Umkhonto we Sizwe ("Spear of the Nation") — ANC's armed wing, founded in 1960. Confines most sabotage attacks to "hard" military and industrial targets. These past five years coordinated frequent attacks on government and Bantustan agencies with popular protests. Still rejects terrorist attacks against white civilians, but as of June 1985 no longer guarantees that it can avoid injury to innocent civilians in attacks on state targets.

UDF (United Democratic Front) — grass-roots coalition of 600 trade-union, religious, community, and political organizations representing nearly 2 million South Africans of all races. Formed in August 1983 to oppose constitutional "reforms" establishing separate "colored" and Indian parliaments. In several townships UDF-affiliates have established vibrant local government alternatives to official "puppet" authorities. Its most militant national affiliate, the *Congress of South African Students (COSAS)*, was banned last September.

South African Communist Party — outlawed in 1950; has worked in close collaboration with the ANC. Predominantly black membership and leadership, but whites play a significant role. Was key in trade-union organizing of 1940s and '50s. Hard to estimate its influence today.

BLACK NATIONALIST ORGANIZATIONS

PAC (Pan-Africanist Congress) — split off from ANC in 1958. Hostile to white and CP role in ANC. In exile some PAC members became Maoists, partially

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Gumede, and Albertina Sisulu, the wife of imprisoned secretary-general Walter Sisulu. Its patrons include Mandela, Sisulu, Govan Mbeki, and other imprisoned ANC leaders. But the UDF is truly broader than the ANC, including in its leadership such Black Consciousness veterans as Popo Molefe, Mosiuoa Lekota (both now jailed), and the secretary-general of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Rev. Smangaliso Mikhatshwa. Its most visible patrons—Bishop Desmond Tutu, the Rev. Allan Boesak, and the whites, the Rev. Beyers Naude (Secretary General of the South African Council of Churches) and Andrew Boraine (former president of the National Union of South African Students)—have never been openly associated with the ANC. Yet the historic connection between the UDF and ANC could not have been far from many people's minds when a defiant reading of a message of solidarity from Nelson Mandela, smuggled out of prison, provided the high point of the UDF's 12,000-person founding meeting.

ANC leaders know that their guerrilla forces of at most 8,000 (who will have to infiltrate individually into South Africa now that South Africa has bombed Mozambique into submission) cannot militarily overthrow a standing army of 83,000, a police force of 40,000, and 450,000 white reservists. The ANC recognizes that only a combination of mass political and labor protest and selective armed sabotage might lead to the bargaining table. And foreign economic pressure can profoundly influence South African behavior. Those working for economic sanctions must continue to let South African whites know that prosperity and apartheid may eventually be a contradiction.

WHAT OF ALLEGATIONS that the ANC is dominated by Communists? True, the ANC has worked closely with the small South African Communist party since the 1930s, partly because it was one of the few nonracial organizations with a significant white membership that would cooperate with the

because of aid from China. Suffered greatly when South African government discovered membership list and arrested 2,000 members of its armed wing *Pogo* in 1964. Further divisions in exile have severely curtailed PAC's role in South African internal politics.

Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) —filled political vacuum left by the outlawed ANC and PAC in early 1970s. Predominantly a nonwhite student movement, though influence broadened during 1976–77 Soweto uprising. Argued that "psychological liberation" of blacks meant excluding whites from liberation organizations. Urged white progressives to fight racism in their own community. When *South African Student Organization (SASO)*, founded by martyred Steve Biko, and other BCM groups were outlawed in October 1977, approximately 10,000 members fled into exile. It is estimated that 75 percent of them joined ANC, despite the initial ideological tensions. Black Consciousness, however, remains a powerful ideology within the liberation movement, though the UDF's and ANC's nonracial, coalition strategy definitely predominates.

AZAPO (Azanian People's Organization) —main current successor to the BCM and PAC. *The National Forum*, its coalition meant to rival the UDF, never got off the ground. AZAPO is best known for its opposition to the UDF-supported visit of Sen. Ted Kennedy in February 1985. Criticized recent ANC talks with prominent white business leaders and liberal politicians as "class collaboration."

Inkatha — Zulu tribal organization headed by government-appointed Kwazulu homeland Chief Gatsha Buthelezi. Has significant base among rural residents of Kwazulu, though voluntary membership is hard to estimate because all Kwazulu government employees are required to join. Has definitely been weakened by its recent violent attacks on UDF and ANC activists. Until 1980, ANC tried to cooperate with Buthelezi, recognizing him as a legitimate political figure. But his constant attacks on ANC since and his opposition to international economic sanctions severed those relations. He is likely to be a key figure in any "moderate" or "compromise" solution.

BLACK & NONRACIAL TRADE UNION FEDERATIONS

FOSATU (Federation of South African Trade Unions) — FOSATU affiliates represent 250,000 of South Africa's 700,000 black trade unionists. Organizes on a nonracial basis, with whites playing a significant staff and technical role. Though shop-floor and syndicalist in orientation, FOSATU has cooperated with UDF, particularly in the recent wave of consumer boycotts of white businesses. Most of

(Continued on p. 12)

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ANC. Three open Communists are members of the 30-person ANC Executive Committee, including Moses Mabhida, general secretary of the CP, and Stephen Diamini, president of SACTU. In June '85 CP member Joe Slovo, acknowledged as a key military strategist, became the first white member of the ANC Executive.

The dominant tendency among ANC leaders, however, is an African nationalism committed to building an egalitarian, democratic South Africa. The ANC has always affirmed its broad ideological character—ranging from democratic nationalists to liberal nonracialists to Christian radicals, socialists, and Communists. If there is one ideological orientation common to the leading elders of the ANC (Tambo, Mandela, Mbeki), it is the Christian, humanistic nationalism that emerged out of the Protestant missionary schools and universities (notably Fort Hare) they all have attended. Mandela and Tambo joined the Congress Youth League in 1943, when, as followers of the nationalist leader Anton Lembede, they argued that CP members should be expelled from the Congress because their commitment to nonracial working-class unity diluted the African struggle. Tambo and Mandela later accepted the arguments (often offered by "conservative" members of the Congress) that, as a Congress of the African people rather than a political party, the ANC should admit Communist-party members who did not violate ANC principles.

The key ANC document remains the Freedom Charter of 1955, which outlines a liberal democratic state, characterized by a strong state eco-

the independent regional and community-based trade unions merged with FOSATU last November to form an industrially organized union confederation of over 400,000.

CUSA (Council of Unions of South Africa) — approximately 180,000 members, one-third of them in the National Union of Mineworkers. CUSA adheres largely to a Black Consciousness style, limiting the role of white staffers. Almost merged with FOSATU in November, but pulled out at the last minute.

SACTU (South African Council of Trade Unions) — ANC-affiliated trade-union congress of the 1950s whose membership rose to 70,000 before it was brutally repressed in 1960. Many veterans of that wave of organizing have helped build FOSATU, CUSA, and today's independent trade unions.

WHITE POLITICAL PARTIES

The Nationalist Party — party of Afrikaner nationalism. First came to power in 1948 as an all-class national party favoring Afrikaner political and economic power and rigorous institutionalization of racism. Today the Nationalist party has its strongest base among middle-class Afrikaners and civil servants, and nearly 40 percent of white English speakers vote Nationalist.

Conservative Party — recent right-wing split from the Nationalist party led by former Information Minister Connie Muldar. Opposes the Botha constitutional "reforms" and favors a "partition" preserving white control of industry, black labor, and the army—but granting complete "independence" to the homelands. Its base is principally among rural and working-class Afrikaners.

Herstigte Nationale Party — (the "Refounded [true] Nationalist party")the fundamentalist wing of Afrikaner nationalism. Formed in the early 1970s when "petty apartheid" (segregation of public facilities) began to be eroded. In the October 31, 1985 by-elections, it gained its first representative to parliament in the white Afrikaner working-class constituency of Sasolburg. Between them, these two conservative Afrikaner parties probably represent a fifth of the white electorate.

Progressive Federal Party (PFP) — leading white liberal opposition party in parliament. While vigorously opposed to the pass laws and "forced removals," the party has never endorsed the principle of one-person, one-vote in a unitary state. Though it only garners 20 percent of the white vote, this represents 60 percent of all white English-speaking voters. Some PFP leaders would probably play a critical role in any negotiated settlement. Financially backed by the corporate community's liberal wing, which opposes the increasing statism and "irrationality" of the apartheid system. Some of its most outspoken leaders, notably Helen Suzman and Molly Blackburn, are admired by many black South Africans. But, so far, the PFP as a whole is far away from supporting the type of society envisioned in the ANC Freedom Charter.

The Black Sash, the white women's organization aiding victims of the pass laws, draws much of its support from PFP activists. □

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nomic sector and a commitment to preserving individual and group rights.

Oliver Tambo has stated in numerous interviews that the ANC receives all its arms and military training from the Eastern bloc; but he continually adds that most of its budget (estimated at $30 million) comes from the Scandinavian countries, with other significant contributions from Nigeria, Holland, and even Saudi Arabia (not noted as a pro-Soviet bastion). In an interview with *Time* magazine he stated, "We would like to get Western weapons as a gesture of support from the West."

Though the South African government prevents us from knowing Nelson Mandela's current outlook, the politics of his famous treason trial speech of April 20, 1964 can be best described as expressing a non-Marxian, libertarian African socialism. This may sound eclectic, but Mandela makes clear that his political convictions draw on various intellectual and moral traditions. "Some form of socialism must enable our people to catch up with the advanced countries of this world and to overcome their legacy of extreme poverty. But this does not mean we are Marxists." As a "parliament of all African people" and not a political party, the ANC should be open to all persons, including Communists, who are "united by the common goal of national liberation." But Mandela makes clear that while the CP's short-term goals coincide with those of the ANC, the long-term goals are very different. Just as Communists supported liberation movements in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Algeria without those postindependence regimes becoming Communist, says Mandela, the same is likely to happen in South Africa.

Mandela then proceeds to outline why he is not a Marxist. It is worth quoting this section at length, because our foreign-policy establishment may once again swing staunchly behind the present South African regime as a means of staving off "Communist domination in strategically critical Southern Africa":

> From my reading of Marxist literature and from conversations with Marxists, I have gained the impression that Communists regard the parliamentary system of the West as undemocratic and reactionary. But, on the contrary, I am an admirer of such a system.
>
> The Magna Charta, the Petition of Rights, and the Bill of Rights are documents which are held in veneration by democrats throughout the world.
>
> I have great respect for British political institutions, and for the country's system of justice. I regard the British parliament as the most democratic institution in the world and the independence and impartiality of its judiciary never failed to arouse my admiration.
>
> The American Congress, that country's doctrine of separation of powers, as well as the independence of its judiciary, arouse in me similar sentiments.

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Given the composition of today's ANC—with its strong influx of exiled veterans of the Black Consciousness movement; close and growing informal ties to the UDF whose constituent organizations run the gamut of South African democratic politics; and relations with an emerging independent trade union movement that the ANC now acknowledges as a critical force in the movement for liberation and whose leadership is frequently radical, syndicalist, socialist, and anti-Stalinist—it is no surprise that such democrats as Bishop Tutu, Nadine Gordimer, and the leaders of the Socialist International support the ANC and its pivotal role in the liberation movement. The UDF and the burgeoning independent trade unions too, of course, are vibrant, emerging forces in the South African black resistance.

Given the South African government's recent news blackout and unabated oppression, it is critical that overseas activists pressure their governments to break the economic and strategic ties that keep apartheid in power. □

David Bromwich

Nicaragua, Civil Liberties & U.S. Policy

In mid-October the Nicaraguan government announced a suspension of civil liberties, including the rights to free expression, free assembly, and privacy in the use of postal services. With these measures has come a new stringency in the censorship of the press. As democrats we are obliged to condemn the government's action: we believe that such measures can only be justified, by a legitimate government, under a threat to the very survival of the country itself in time of war. This justification was not, however, invoked by President Ortega. His pretext instead was the discovery of a bomb plot that suggested a larger but as yet unconfirmable design of urban terrorism against the government. By Ortega's own account, his defensive war against the Contras is proceeding successfully in any case. Had the government responded to the threat by strengthening the police, without greatly impairing the liberties of the people, it would have commanded respect.

This much ought to be said by any non-Communist who sympathizes with the dreadful crisis in which U.S. foreign policy has placed Nicaragua. And this much is not cant. But politics is a world of causes and consequences, and not only of good and evil actions to be judged. The latest tactic of the Nicaraguan government was a predictable response—a response, indeed, predicted in these pages—to the strategy of harassment and terror that America has pursued in Nicaragua. As the Reagan Administrations' instruments of policy grow more brutal and its statements of policy more treacherous, the Nicaraguan government answers in kind. What inducement have we ever given them to practice what we preach? Let them offer to negotiate through the Contadora process, and we declare our contempt for the Contadora process. Let them appeal to international law in the World Court, and at once we refuse to recognize the court's jurisdiction. Let them stagger from the effects of a trade embargo, and we are morally piqued ("shocked, shocked") that they now receive more trade from the Soviet Union.

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Since 1982 Ronald Reagan has been rewriting the story of Nicaragua, to his own specifications. Finally, and under immense pressure, that country is beginning to play the role in which he cast it from

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the start. Its one hope always lay in the slow, stubborn, pragmatic resistance of the U.S. Congress, a brake that was lost with the spree of panic conversions after Ortega's trip to Moscow. What is left of the resistance can only regulate the flow of $27 million, into the pockets of counterfeit democrats with a proved appetite for killing and plunder. The moral character of the Contras, after all, is no longer in doubt. Even their former director of public relations, Edgar Chamorro, admitted, in a widely discussed article, that he feared their victory more than their defeat. No one therefore who supports the Contras can pretend to judge innocently the new repressive measures of the Nicaraguan government. In the days since these were first announced, Ortega has offered to restore civil liberties as soon as acts of sabotage under Reagan's patronage are halted. If the U.S. had enough sense to take him up on this, it could begin the work of joining Nicaragua to the large and varied company of nations we regard as imperfect but not unconscionable: such nations as South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and the Philippines, which our policymakers would never dream of calling totalitarian.□

Jim Sleeper

The Sacking of Sydney Schanberg

New York Times employees of every rank and station formed lines outside Sydney Schanberg's tenth-floor office for several days after his "New York" column was unceremoniously discontinued early last fall. They weren't all there in support of Schanberg's liberal-progressive positions on real-estate speculation and city policy toward the victims, nor, they knew, were those positions *by themselves* the reason for his sacking.

Instead, many *Times* people were animated by disgust and respect: disgust with the way a 26-year *Times* veteran, who had risked his life for the paper in Cambodia in pursuit of his Pulitzer prize-winning stories, was being treated by management—and respect for the largeness of spirit and high standards of fairness that animate Schanberg's work.

As a New York City-oriented columnist, Schanberg was a precious anomaly at the *Times*, which, more than other papers, tends to treat the city beat as a sandbox for cub reporters or a pasture for burned-out cases: mistakes made in Brooklyn don't damage *Times* access to Very Important People or send tremors through the edifice of the Western Alliance. By the time a star reporter has achieved the socialization and seniority requisite for a column, he or she is fancied too preoccupied with affairs of state and "serious" matters to muck about in "local" affairs.

Schanberg broke that mold. Haunted by the lessons of his heroic chronicling of the collapse of Pnom Penh's social order, he saw symptoms of such a collapse in the rapaciousness of New York City's real-estate developers and the lawlessness and growing arrogance of its elites. His passion for the particular—Smith-Barney's unearned tax breaks and landlords' harassment of elderly tenants—reflected his experience with deepening urban injustice.

Schanberg's "unpardonable sin" wasn't that he didn't become a William Safire of the left, pointing his observations with worldly irony; rather, as *Times* company vice-chairman Sydney Gruson told him on the day Schanberg returned from vacation, he had once too often—in his final column, on Westway, in fact—dared to criticize

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Times news coverage according to standards the paper claims to uphold. One may criticize anything, *Times* columnists are given to understand, except the *Times* itself.

Rather than reassess the quality of its own journalism on Westway and half a dozen other matters Schanberg had raised during his four years on the column, *Times* management chose to dismiss a veteran who personifies its own standard of reporting "without fear or favor." Schanberg's left-of-center views only made the decision that much easier. □

LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

Thomas B. Edsall

An Enduring Republican Majority?

The Republican party under Ronald Reagan has shaped a fragile majority in presidential elections whose strength and vitality will be tested in 1988. In terms of partisan allegiance, the GOP has made striking gains over the past five years, reaching near-parity with the Democratic party for the first time since the late 1940s. None of the prospective candidates—Vice-President George Bush, New York Representative Jack Kemp, Kansas Senator Robert Dole, Nevada Senator Paul Laxalt—has demonstrated the political appeal of Ronald Reagan; for any one of these politicians to win against a credible Democratic candidate will require the conversion of what has been the *Reagan* coalition into a *Republican* coalition. The success or failure of the 1988 Republican nominee is likely to be, in effect, a gauge of realignment.

In many respects, the Reagan–Republican coalition has the kind of coherence suggesting durability, if not growing muscle. In terms of presidential voting, the major strength of this coalition is geographic: in the past five elections, a bloc of Southern and Western states has voted Republican by significantly stronger margins than the country as a whole. These states provide 202 of the 270 electoral votes required for election. In terms of ideology, there are divisions within the Republican universe—ranging from the fiscal conservatism of Senator Dole to the tax-cutting strategies of Jack Kemp—but these are not fissures. Neither camp is in any way likely to bolt to the Democratic party in a fashion paralleling, for example, the shift of once Democratic Southern whites to the GOP.

Demographically, the coalition of voters who identify with the Republican party is not only white, but it is coming to increasingly represent the emergence of a new majority of the affluent. The Administration of Ronald Reagan has intensified a strong return to class divisions between those who identify with the Republican party and those who identify with the Democratic party. The shift of upscale Southern whites to the GOP and the increasingly strong ties of blacks to the Democratic party have produced a restoration of economic divisions between the two parties very similar to those of the Depression. The difference now, however, is that this time the party of the poor and the working class is no longer the majority party.

The partisan makeup of the electorate has substantial consequences for the internal strength of each party. Financially, Republican ideological and economic homogeneity makes party activists an ideal donor base, perfectly suited to the direct-mail fund-raising tactics required by the campaign

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finance reforms of 1972 and '74. At the same time the GOP has been the beneficiary of the steady erosion of participatory politics, through the decline of the precinct and ward organization. This decline has produced a parallel rise in the importance of a national fund-raising apparatus to finance the acquisitions of political high technology: computerized poll and census data, tele-marketing, demographic targeting of mail, television (cable, UHF, and VHF), and radio appeals. The extraordinary disparity between the financing of the two parties is reflected in part by the fact that this past fall the Democratic National Committee financed its first poll since 1981, at a cost of $125,000; during 1984, the Republican National Committee paid Richard Wirthlin's Decision-Making Information $168,000 for poll data *every month*. Overall, the three major Democratic committees—the Democratic National, Congressional, and Senatorial—were outspent by the parallel Republican committees in the 1983–84 election cycle by a margin of four to one.

These strengths, combined with the presence of a highly popular incumbent president, economic recovery, and a Democratic party in shambles, raise a basic question: with all these advantages, why hasn't the Republican party already gained clear majority status? Why has a realignment failed to fully materialize? This is a very difficult question to answer and what follows is only a tentative exploration.

PERHAPS THE CENTRAL LIABILITY of the Republican party is the continuing public identification of the GOP as the party of the rich and of corporate America. This perception was reinforced in spades by the enactment of the budget and tax cuts of 1981—when the GOP became, in effect, the party of regressive redistribution—and by the subsequent recession of 1981–82. Over the past generation, however, the identification of the GOP with the rich has become less and less a liability as the population as a whole has become more affluent. In 1958, for example, when a recession severely undercut the Republican party under the leadership of Dwight Eisenhower, just 14.3 percent of all families had incomes in excess of $25,000 (in 1980 dollars). By the start of the Reagan administration, however, this percentage had grown to 39.3. The Republican party has gained strength in large part because the nation itself has become more affluent.

But the nation does not yet appear ready to grant a full-fledged majority commitment to a party of the elite. Republican strategists are aware of this liability, and a central political rationale behind the Reagan administration's sponsorship this year of tax reform was to create a "populist" appeal to the middle and lower-middle classes by attacking loopholes used by corporations and the rich. This turned out, however, to be a demonstration of the continued strength of the affluent in the Republican party. As proposed by President Reagan, the "populist" tax-reform bill gave by far the largest tax breaks, in dollar and percentage terms, to those making more than $200,000 annually, in effect making a mockery of populist goals. In addition, whatever political momentum has developed behind the legislation has come from one segment of the business community—such "high-tax" corporations as IBM and Proctor & Gamble, which would benefit from the proposed lowering of the top corporate rate from 46 to 33 percent—while there has been no public outpouring of support. Clearly, the Republican party is not equipped to tap into either popular suspicion of corporate power or into the belief that the nation's tax policies are designed for the benefit of the rich.

The second major Republican vulnerability is its deep dependence for support on the mobilization of the fundamentalist religious community. By conservative estimate, the rise of the Christian right, and its firm alignment with the Republican party, resulted in the switch, from 1976 to 1984, of about 8.25 million to 9 million voters from the Democratic party to the Republican party. These voters, in turn, are demonstrating a commitment to the GOP far deeper than voting for Ronald Reagan: over half of the GOP's 1984 gains in the House of Representatives, and a substantial proportion of the Republican pickup of 300 state legislative seats, particularly in North Carolina and Texas, came in areas where fundamentalists were most active.

In a reflection of Reagan's political genius, the religious right has, to date, been drawn into the Republican fold without making significant headway at the federal level on its own agenda of banning abortion, restoring prayer, teaching creationism in public schools, and regulating the content of school textbooks, the publication of pornography, and sexual relations generally. To the extent that these issues become central to either the legislative agenda or the political debate in the contest for the Republican presidential nomination, the Republican party will be in a no-win situation, threatened by losses from the social-issue right insofar as its agenda is rejected, and by losses among the broad spectrum of voters who do not support the notion of government regulation of personal behavior.

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In addition to the fundamentalist vote, new Republican support comes in large part from those voters who initially describe themselves as political independents, and who voice a leaning toward the GOP only when pressed. Among many of these independent voters the religious right agenda is unacceptable.

In this context, the most advantageous scenario for the Republicans between now and the 1988 convention would be to avoid an intense nomination fight. A bitterly fought struggle for the nomination is the only way for the discordant factions within the GOP to force consideration of their own objectives, in a process that could replicate the degeneration of the Democratic party from the collective expression of a majority consensus to a network of conflicts between isolated interest groups.

WHILE IT IS FAR TOO EARLY to predict anything concerning the outcome of the 1988 Republican primary fight, current signs are that Vice-President George Bush is moving toward an early lock on the nomination. If Bush is to be successfully challenged, it will have to be from the ideological and Christian right of the party; but at the moment the right remains divided, while Bush is proceeding to expand his base significantly among party moderates, his 1980 supporters, and Reagan loyalists. Jack Kemp, at the moment, has emerged as the main challenger to Bush, but Kemp is already experiencing difficulty holding his base together.

Leaders of the hard ideological right—direct-mail specialist Richard Viguerie, Conservative Caucus chairman Howard Phillips, and Paul Weyrich, leader of the Committee for the Survival of a Free Congress—have all begun to criticize Kemp for failing to adequately stress abortion and other social issues. Kemp, an opponent of abortion, has attempted to maintain his conservative credentials by emphasizing the "profamily" elements of his economic policy, including the proposed raising of the personal deduction to $2,000, instead of promoting his stands on more divisive social issues. At the same time, Marion G. (Pat) Robertson, the television evangelist and host of the Christian Broadcasting Network's 700 Club, has set in motion the start of his own bid for the GOP nomination, which, if he follows through, will further divide the GOP's conservative wing. Kemp, in addition, damaged his own credentials among conservatives and other supporters by the vacillating stand he took on sanctions against South Africa: first voting against them, then voting for them and, after his second vote, saying President Reagan would be "wise" to veto the legislation. His way of dealing with the issue did not boost support on the right and, more generally, damaged his credentials as a candidate equipped to make the kind of decisions required of a president.

Bush, in the meantime, has quietly set up an organization that is expanding his support into the Republican right, largely by capitalizing on his loyalty to the president in order to win the support of conservatives who backed Reagan in 1976 and 1980, including many who were bitterly opposed to Bush when he ran against Reagan in 1980. Bush set up a political action committee to channel money to 1986 House and Senate candidates, and in just six weeks the PAC raised far more money than any of his competitors were able to raise over six months. His supporters include the two top strategists of the Reagan–Bush '84 Committee—Edward Rollins, the campaign manager, and Lee Atwater, the deputy campaign manager—along with Republican pollster Robert Teeter, who has the best data base of any survey specialist of either party.

Bush also brings to a campaign for the Republican nomination a set of substantial liabilities. Most important, his public persona lacks Reagan's appeal: he claims Texas roots while appearing most relaxed sailing off Kennebunkport, Maine. As a candidate claiming the Reagan mantle, he looks, walks and talks like a quintessential Eastern, Wall Street Republican, the enemy of the conservative wing of the GOP from Taft through Goldwater to Reagan.

IN THIS HIGHLY DELICATE PROCESS not only of determining the Republican nominee but of determining whether the Republican surge will continue after Reagan, perhaps the central question will be the timing of Administration efforts to control the economy. If the Administration and the Federal Reserve determine that a recession is inevitable between now and the 1988 election, the key questions will be, first, should an attempt be made to time the emergence of the recession and, if the answer is affirmative, then when—before the 1986 election or before the 1988 election?

For the Reagan administration, this is a tough choice to make. Timing a recession to occur after the 1986 election would significantly increase the likelihood of the GOP holding onto the Senate. Continued GOP control would sharply increase Reagan's ability to determine the nation's legislative agenda through his entire eight years in office. Timing a recession to occur before the 1986 election would, in turn, ensure Republican loss of the Senate. It would also, however, create the possibil-

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ities of a replay of Reagan's first term to the benefit of whoever is the Republican nominee in 1988. In Reagan's first term, a recession forced significant losses in the 1982 election, but then set the stage for an economic resurgence for the 1984 election, making Reagan invulnerable, and leading to a GOP landslide. This latter alternative represents the kind of gamble no politician is likely to take, particularly when there is any expectation at all that a recession could be avoided altogether.

If George Bush is to be the Republican party's nominee, his liabilities and strengths will, in many ways, make him an ideal test of the degree of realignment that has taken place in the United States. George Bush, unlike Ronald Reagan, would have severe difficulties making a quasi-populist appeal. For Bush to win the presidency would, then, suggest that a majority of the electorate has made a commitment to a party demographically dominated by the affluent, and that there has been an economic inversion of the New Deal coalition into a new Republican majority. □

Michael Harrington

Willful Shortsightedness on Poverty

The White House euphoria over the drop in the poverty rate to 14.4 percent in 1984 is deeply disturbing. In celebrating a statistical "triumph," President Reagan and his staff have obscured a larger injustice.

Any reduction in the number of the poor is, of course, a reason to rejoice. And that is true even though the event is hardly a surprise. Every expert predicted the 1984 decline in poverty because real economic growth of almost 6 percent in that year would inevitably help some people at the bottom of the ladder.

But the Administration's simplistic and ideological response to the new numbers—they prove, in Mr. Reagan's view, the superiority of free enterprise—blindly ignores the fact that the poverty rate is now higher than it has been in any year since 1965, with the exception of 1982 and 1983. A one-year improvement, from 1983 to 1984, is said to vindicate our economic policies. But there is no comment on the fact that we have "advanced" to poverty levels we reached 20 years ago.

This willful shortsightedness is not new. In recent years, shoddy interpretations of statistics have regularly provided a basis for moral indifference and political complacency.

For instance, unemployment went from a recession high of almost 11 percent in 1982 to 7.3 percent in October 1984. In the 1984 election campaign, this trend was cited as a measure of the Administration's economic success, and one was constantly reminded of the millions of jobs generated by the recovery. Few remembered that John F. Kennedy targeted a 3 percent unemployment rate, or that the Republican party was savaged by the electorate in the Congressional elections of 1970 because joblessness had soared to 4.8 percent.

So 8.5 million people out of work—and millions driven from the labor market who are forced to take part-time jobs—are just a fact of social life these days. The most dynamic recovery in 30 years, as the president calls it, has an unemployment rate that, in the antediluvian age of a decade ago, would have been associated with a deep recession.

Another example. In 1981, the Congressional Budget Office tells us, the Reagan tax cuts increased the disposable income of households with over $80,000 a year by $8,930 and decreased that of households with less than $10,000 a year by $440. That reactionary governmental redistribution of income was partly the result of deductions that discriminated in favor of the rich and against the poor.

By law, the Treasury is required to itemize those deductions in a "tax expenditure budget." How does one deal with such scandalous numbers? The Administration simply redefined tax expenditures to make them go down on paper even as they went up in real life. America was turned into a fairer society by a crafty stroke of the pen. And now there is the jubilation that there were only 33.7 million poor people in 1984—which is higher than the number of the poor in 1964, when President Johnson declared his war on poverty.

This new callousness, however, does not simply corrupt our values. It muddies our understanding as well. There is growing evidence that economic growth in the '80s is much less effective in eliminating poverty than it was in the '60s, that the reshaping of the occupational structure, the technological revolution, and the internationalization of the economy are creating an environment in which poverty is all the more tenacious. And that is a threat, not simply to the poor but to all of us, an important fact that the current ignorant celebration utterly obscures.

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Jan Józef Lipski

KOR: Ethics of a Movement

A quite remarkable book is being published by the University of California Press: KOR, Workers' Defense Committee in Poland, 1976–1981, *by Jan Józef Lipski. Lipski, a distinguished historian and literary critic, was a leading figure in KOR, the committee of Polish intellectuals formed in 1976 to help Polish workers dismissed from their jobs because they had protested against the policies of the Communist dictatorship. From a small social-help group, KOR soon developed into a significant network of people extending far beyond intellectual groups; it devoted itself to helping victims of persecution, documenting violations of democratic rights, and enabling a freer public life in Poland. Some of its leaders became important participants and advisers in Solidarity. Lipski's book offers rich detail on how KOR worked, and on its problems and limitations. We print here a few passages from an especially interesting chapter, "The Ethos of the Workers' Defense Committee [KOR]," with the kind permission of the University of California Press* — Eds.

The Workers' Defense Committee represented not only a specific idea of social action but also a certain style of action, which was refined gradually over the course of several years. . . .

Above all, KOR meant social and not political activity; this was a consequence of its initial assumptions, although they need not have been reflected in reality. Obviously, some members of KOR (such as Jacek Kuroń, Adam Michnik, and Antoni Macierewicz) were political activists above all, both in their temperament and interests. As a result it became necessary for them to distinguish their activities in KOR from their own political writings, for which they alone were responsible. Among the members and associates of KOR were some who held well-defined political opinions, others who were not particularly interested in politics and whose entire political program could be reduced to the desire for sovereignty and democracy for Poland, with no attempt to specify the means of achieving these goals. Moreover, those KOR activists who did hold political opinions represented a variety of orientations and viewpoints. It was obvious that under these circumstances KOR could never have become a political party, but its conscious antitotalitarian attitude, together with its program in defense of moral and humanitarian values, created a broad base of understanding and an opportunity to gain public support.

KOR's dominant role was in the area of social work. What did this mean? Above all, it meant that KOR's primary interest was in real people who needed help: money, advice, legal or medical aid, a job, or sometimes simply moral support. It was necessary to find the time and the means to provide such help, even if this interfered with other activities. KOR activists were aware that the committee's work in this area was sometimes better and sometimes worse, but even among KOR members the reputation of the committee was determined by its performance in this area.

At the same time, the work involved broader social interests that went beyond a readiness to offer help to individuals. As an example we might cite one issue of the *Information Bulletin* that could be described as a social monograph on Ra-

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dom. The Radom team not only rendered actual help to specific individuals but also observed their lives, tried to understand them, and to draw conclusions about the living conditions and needs of the people in the city of Radom. The members of this team had been trained in a variety of professions; they were not only activists but also had a sociological outlook. It is only when an individual attitude toward a specific person is combined with a broader sociological perspective that one can achieve a fully mature style of social work. In some dissident circles—in the Confederation of Independent Poland, for example—KOR members were sneered at as "social workers." Within KOR, such a designation by one's colleagues was regarded as an honor. . . .

KOR IMPOSED no work discipline as such. There was no question of ordering someone by command of the organization to do something he did not want to do. Since not all activities are equally attractive, there were occasions when volunteers had to be sought while there were too many volunteers for other kinds of work, or when it became necessary to appeal to a sense of responsibility. As a rule, when people came to the committee to offer their help, they were able to work within the committee and the movement on those things that they particularly enjoyed doing, even when these were seemingly minor matters. Often the new people came with their own notions of what should be done. There was a principle that if what they wanted to do was not contrary to the principles of KOR, they should be allowed to pursue their own ideas. And this is why everything that was accomplished was done by people who were motivated by their own initiative and enthusiasm, and this produced the best results.

This principle, which could be called the principle of genuine autonomy of action, influenced the formation of the ethos of KOR and was also directly connected with one of KOR's most important strategic ideas: that the long-range goal of KOR was to stimulate new centers of autonomous activity in a variety of areas and among a variety of social groups independent of KOR. Not only did KOR agree to their independence but it also wanted them to be independent. Thus entirely independent institutions were formed—a publishing house, the Student Solidarity committees, and others—which were not in conflict with one another.

ALSO IMPORTANT for the atmosphere in the committee was its attitude toward the possibility that KOR might be infiltrated by the Security Service. Accordingly, it was more difficult to gain access to some kinds of work than to others. The rule of overtness could not be extended to the addresses of print shops and storage places, or to the files of those receiving help. Thus a certain degree of selection was necessary for those granted access to this kind of work. But basically KOR had a different recruitment policy. Anyone could present himself as ready to work. If one came with references from some trustworthy people, so much the better, but references were not required. KOR's doctrine was to trust everyone within the bounds of common sense. Apart from those instances of house searches and arrests in which the hand of an agent could clearly be discerned, any consideration of possible links between a KOR associate and the Security Service was inadmissible. These problems and approaches were formulated with particular clarity by Jacek Kuroń, who gained full approval for his position. There was agreement that in a movement such as KOR, an atmosphere in which everyone suspected everyone else would ultimately be more dangerous than the possibility of overlooking a few agents. . . .

What had to be fought especially hard was the conceited idea that there was nothing to fear because an intelligent dissident would always be able to lead a stupid "cop" around by the nose. The reality was rather that the dissident was not always so intelligent, and the interrogator was usually not an idiot. The technique of not participating in any conversation at all during interrogations was not always easy to accept psychologically, especially for a novice, so that associates were constantly being drilled in its use. Usually this approach was successful, and it became something more than a rule in an unwritten code: loyalty toward the committee and toward one's colleagues was a matter of honor and good form.

This refusal to testify was one of the differences between KOR and many earlier movements (I am referring to the post-Stalinist period; before that, highly refined tortures had been used, so that the situations cannot be compared, although the history of KOR also notes cases in which beatings were used to extort testimony). Earlier, people inexperienced and untrained had given evidence under interrogation, bringing harm to themselves and others, even when they did not break down and

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were able to maintain a dignified posture, which involved above all the principle of not implicating one's colleagues. But whoever starts giving evidence will always say a few words too many, and very often does not know which information is important or new to the person conducting the interrogation. One must add that KOR was against giving false testimony, both on ethical grounds and because of the harsh criminal sanctions that could then be invoked. From the practice described above came the formula used in the *KOR Communiqués*: "Attempted interrogation." This meant that the interrogated person had refused to answer questions.

The principles of discretion mentioned above also involved the directive: "Don't wag your tongue," do not tell stories about actual KOR work, even among people you trust. Why should you? These principles of discretion, developed in the Home Army, were taught above all by Jósef Rybicki, who explained that it was not a matter of mistrust or even of rationally applied caution but of something more: one had to instill in oneself and in one's closest associates a feeling of responsibility for everything and everybody.

Discretion was the hardest thing to achieve, both because of the natural tendency against it shared by many, especially among the young (but not only among the young) associates, and also because KOR associates were supposed to spread the word about KOR and its activities to others, so that it was often difficult to draw a line between promoting the work of KOR and indiscretion. It was easier to subject oneself to the often bothersome rigors of silence about the specifics of KOR work in apartments suspected of being bugged (and, basically, all the apartments of known KOR associates were suspected), or of writing on a piece of paper that would be destroyed immediately, or discussing delicate matters during walks, far from possible listeners. After only a few weeks, not to mention several years, such behavior would become automatic, but it was always annoying and, worse, it reaffirmed the sense that one was living under abnormal, crazy conditions.

• One important ethical principle adopted by KOR was that KOR did not lie. This principle also had a pragmatic basis and justification, to a greater extent even than the principle of renouncing violence and hatred: in a struggle with authorities that had especially compromised themselves when it came to telling the truth, it was better to renounce falsehood completely and gain confidence in this manner than to lay oneself open to the possibility that every departure from the truth could be blown up by the mass media. The charges by the official press and television that KOR was telling lies would remain without effect for only so long as the readers of KOR statements and communiqués could not themselves detect any lies or misrepresentations on the part of KOR.

• Renunciation of the use of force was a steadfast ideological principle of KOR. Thus an agent who was uncovered risked nothing more than social ostracism. A spy was safe in a dark alley where a trap could have been awaiting him; a provocateur knew that his blow would not be returned. Only once, as Jacek Kuroń's apartment was being invaded by a goon squad of karate experts and other thugs from the Academy of Physical Education and the Union of Polish Students, one of those present was unable to restrain himself and returned a blow.

This detail was singled out in the official media for repetition ad nauseam, while the invasion as a whole yielded two concussions, one heart attack, and several severe beatings. The general opinion was that the principle of nonviolence was not just a tactical rule, not just an expression of concern for the safety of KOR itself or an attempt to prevent further retaliation, but the deliberate reflection of a conscious attitude.

This opinion was connected with the belief that if KOR had responded with hatred to beatings, arrests, provocations, and slanders, then it would have been doomed to failure, since hatred is self-destructive. Perhaps on no other issue did KOR exhibit so deeply the influence of Christian ethics.

AT LEAST THEORETICALLY, KOR adopted a general principle that not only mistakes but even evil done to another person should be forgiven. But by whom? Generally, the evil in question has been done to society, so that each of its members should have a part in the process of forgiveness. Obviously, people often added that forgiveness can be offered only under certain conditions. The condition of compensation for one's past is clear, but a person engaged in a struggle with evil is meeting this condition. The conscious recognition of someone's honest decision to reform is a matter of trust; and this varied. It seems, however, that the very fact of

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cooperation with KOR regulated this issue at least in part. Penance was not difficult to find in KOR, although it is likely that neither those involved nor their colleagues would be willing to accept this term and this presentation of the problem. When two comrades-in-arms are being beaten, it is difficult to say that for one it is a penance, the payment of a debt, and at the same time a credit or merit to the other.

The most complicated problem was that of an honest admission of guilt. First: to whom should this guilt be confessed? To everyone? Then why does the Catholic church, wise in these matters, believe that this is an issue to be taken up between the individual and God, although with the mediation of God's representative? Then again, public admissions of guilt are frequently demanded, and these demands are easy to understand. Conversely, resistance to such demands is also easy to understand: contrite repentance (if not before God) is generally not viewed with favor, and a moral compulsion to repent is difficult to accept, especially since the evil done to society by the Stalinists often seemed to be the result of a certain kind of madness, an illness that did not exclude good intentions. This was a complicated tangle of good intentions and self-deception, of knowledge and ignorance, of moral and intellectual madness and of a certain self-control over this madness. The evaluation of one's own guilt is often accompanied by the conviction, ex post facto but honest and justified, that the whole truth could be discovered only by revealing all the motives in all their ramifications, and that any other truth would be unfair to the person who is doing the accounting. This, however, makes understanding more difficult, since the plaintiffs are themselves among those who were treated unfairly, often pitilessly.

The author believes that it was a good thing that KOR did not try to resolve these issues in a general fashion or to pass judgment; although there did occur several clashes that were in some sense unavoidable and reflected problems pervasive in the society (and known to all societies that have endured a true totalitarianism, that is, one in which an ideology is truly alive). If the milieu was indeed fundamentally conditioned by Christian ethics, then there was probably some shared memory of the joy of finding one's lost sheep; or that Peter denied Christ three times out of fear; or that Saul, the oppressor of Christians, was rightly forgiven when he came to join them; or that only those who are themselves without sin have the right to cast the first stone.

THIS HAS BEEN AN ATTEMPT to describe the general principles of action accepted within KOR, together with its moral atmosphere, which meant that we were not worse than we actually were and, what is more, we had the ambition and the good intention of becoming better. Thanks to this, what we accomplished as a group, despite all the faults and imperfections in our deeds, was better than most of us individually.

Translated from the Polish by OLGA AMSTERDAMSKA □

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Primo Levi

A Disciple

The distinguished Italian-Jewish writer Primo Levi *is best known for his books* Survival in Auschwitz *(1947) and* The Reawakening *(1963), which deal with his experiences as a prisoner, or slave laborer, in Auschwitz and then his torturous experience of return to Italy. But as he writes in the introduction to his new book,* Moments of Reprieve *(translated into English by* Ruth Feldman*): "A host of details continued to surface in my memory and the idea of letting them fade away distressed me. And especially a great number of human figures stood out against that tragic background. . . . " The result is a book of sketches—little incidents, quick character portraits—that deal with the stratagems by which some of the men and women of Auschwitz tried to survive.*

We are grateful to Primo Levi's American publisher, Summit Books, for permission to print the following selection from Moments of Reprieve. — I.H.

The Hungarians arrived among us, not in a trickle but all at once. In the space of two months, May and June 1944, they invaded the Lager, convoy after convoy, filling the void that the Germans had not neglected to create with a series of diligent selections. The newcomers caused a profound change in the fabric of all the camps. At Auschwitz the wave of Magyars reduced the three other nationalities to minorities, without, however, making a dent in the cadres, which remained in the hands of the German and Polish common criminals.

All the barracks and work squads were inundated by the Hungarians, around whom, as happens in all communities around new arrivals, an atmosphere of derision, gossip, and vague intolerance rapidly condensed. They were workmen and peasants, simple and robust, who did not fear manual labor but were used to abundant food, and who, for that reason, in a few weeks were reduced to pitiful skeletons. Others were professional men, students and intellectuals, who came from Budapest and other cities. They were mild individuals, slow, patient and methodical, and hunger afflicted them less, but they had delicate skins, and in no time at all were covered with sores and bruises, like ill-treated horses.

At the end of June a good half of my squad was made up of fine fellows, still well-nourished, still full of optimism and joviality. They communicated with us in a curious dragged-out German, and communicated with each other in their odd language, which bristled with unusual inflections, and seems to be made up of interminable words, pronounced with irritating slowness, and all with the accent on the first syllable.

One of them was assigned to me as work companion. He was a strong, pink-faced young man, of medium height, whom everyone called Bandi: the diminutive of Endre/Andrew, he explained to me as though it were the most

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natural thing in the world. Our task that day was to carry bricks on a sort of crude wooden litter equipped with two poles in front and two behind: twenty bricks a trip. Halfway along the path stood an overseer, and he checked to see that the load was regulation.

Twenty bricks are heavy; so on the outgoing trip we did not have much breath, or at least I didn't, for talking; but on the way back we spoke and I learned many attractive things about Bandi. I wouldn't be able to repeat them all today: every memory fades. And yet I cling to the memories of this man Bandi as precious things, and I am happy to preserve them on a page. I only wish that, by some not impossible miracle, the page might reach him in the corner of the world where he still lives, perhaps, that he might read it and we could find each other again.

He told me his name was Endre Szántó, a name that is pronounced more or less like "santo" in Italian, and this reinforced in me the vague impression of a halo that seemed to encircle his shaved head. I told him so; but no, he explained laughingly to me: Szántó means plower, or, more generically, peasant. It is a very common last name in Hungary, and besides, he was not a plower but worked in a factory. The Germans had captured him three years earlier, not because he was Jewish but because of his political activity, had enrolled him in the Todt Organization, and sent him to be a woodcutter in the Ukrainian Carpathians. He had spent two winters in the woods, cutting down pine trees with three companions: heavy work but he had liked it and had been almost happy there. Besides, I soon realized that Bandi had a unique talent for happiness. Oppression, humiliations, hard work, exile—all seemed to slide off him like water off a rock and without corrupting or wounding, indeed purifying and enhancing him and in him his inborn capacity for joy, as we are told happened to the simple, cheerful and pious Chassidim described by Jirí Langer in his novel *The Nine Doors*.

Bandi told me about his entrance into the Lager. When the convoy arrived, the SS forced all the men to take off their shoes and hang them around their necks, and then made them walk barefoot on the jagged stones of the railroad bed, for the entire seven kilometers that separated the station from the camp. He recounted the episode with a shy smile, without asking for commiseration; on the contrary with a touch of childlike and athletic vanity for having "brought it off."

We made three trips together, during which I tried, in a fragmentary fashion, to explain to him that the place he had landed in was not for polite or quiet people. I tried to convince him of a few recent discoveries of mine (in truth, not yet well digested): that down there, in order to get by, it was necessary to get busy, organize illegal food, dodge work, find influential friends, hide one's thoughts, steal, lie; that whoever did not do so was soon dead, and that his saintliness seemed dangerous to me, and out of place. And since, as I have said, twenty bricks are heavy, on our fourth trip, instead of taking twenty of them, I took seventeen and showed him that if you placed them on the litter in a certain way, with an empty space in the lower layer, no one would ever suspect that there weren't twenty. This was a ruse I thought I had invented (I found out later that it was, however, in the public domain), and that I had used several times with success. At other times it had earned me some nasty blows. In any case, it seemed to me that for pedagogical purposes it served well as an illustration of the theories I had expounded to him just before.

Bandi was very sensitive about his condition of "Zugang," that is, new arrival, and to the condition of social subjection that derived from it. Therefore he did not object, but neither did he show any enthusiasm for my invention. "If there are seventeen, why should we make them believe that there are twenty?" "But twenty bricks weigh more than seventeen," I answered impatiently, "and if they're well arranged, no one will notice. Besides, they're not going to be used to build your house or mine." "Yes," he said, "but still seventeen bricks are not twenty." He was not a good disciple.

We worked together for a few more weeks. He told me that he was a Communist sympathizer, not a party member, but his language was that of a proto-Christian. At work he was dexterous and strong, the best worker in the

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squad, but he did not try to profit from this superiority of his, nor show off to the German foremen, nor lord it over us. I told him that in my opinion working like this was a waste of energy, and that it was also politically wrong, but Bandi gave no sign of understanding me; he did not want to lie. In that place we were supposed to work; so he worked as best he could. In no time, with his radiant and childlike face, his energetic voice and awkward gait, Bandi became very popular.

August came, with an extraordinary gift for me: a letter from home—an unprecedented event. In June, with frightful irresponsibility, and through the mediation of a "free" Italian laborer who was a bricklayer, I had written a message for my mother, who was hidden in Italy, and addressed it to a woman friend of mine named Bianca Guidetti Serra. I had done all this as one obeys a ritual, without really hoping for success. Instead, my letter had arrived without difficulty, and my mother had answered via the same route. The letter from the sweet world burned in my pocket; I knew that it was elementary prudence to keep silent, and yet I had to talk about it.

At that time we were cleaning cisterns. I went down into my cistern and Bandi was with me. By the weak gleam of the light bulb, I read the miraculous letter, hastily translating it into German. Bandi listened attentively. Certainly he could not understand much because German was neither my language nor his, and also because the message was scant and reticent. But he understood what it was essential he should understand: that that piece of paper in my hands, which had reached me in such a precarious way, and which I would destroy before nightfall, represented a breach, a small gap in the black universe that closed tightly around us, and through that breach hope could pass.

At least I believe that Bandi, even though he was a "Zugang," understood or sensed all this, because when I was through reading, he came close to me, rummaged at length in his pocket, and finally, with loving care, pulled out a radish. He gave it to me, blushing deeply, and said with shy pride: "I've learned. This is for you: it's the first thing I've stolen." □

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Shoah

SHOAH, *which is the Hebrew word for holocaust, is a film more than nine hours in length. It opened this past October in New York City and is scheduled to be shown throughout the world. It consists of remembrances by a handful of victims who escaped; by some who through chance observed the death camps; and by a few who were instrumental in running and maintaining them. It is a work that ought to be shown in every city and town in America. Here are two discussions—we shall return to it.*—EDS.

Leon Wieseltier

Claude Lanzmann's *Shoah* is more than nine hours long; but long before you understand what is present in this visual account of Auschwitz you understand what is missing from all the others. The others—all the sickening photographs of the living corpses and the dead corpses that the Nazis made out of Europe's Jews—all the images of that inferno that has become canonical in our culture, that has, as if to complete the curse, become even clichéd—all have failed at full exposure of the enormity, at least by the standard of radical exposure that Lanzmann has in mind. A little reflection will reveal, indeed, that rather than exposing us, the famous photographs have protected us, by virtue of their being photographs, that is, frozen, fixed, false to the flow of time in which the sufferings were lived.

The photographs have an extracted quality. They are the epitome of the experience, the apotheosis of the atrocity. But this was an experience without epitome, an atrocity without apotheosis; so it was designed by its German innovators in inhumanity. It stretched on for years across a whole continent, it was long and wide enough to constitute for its victims not an event, but a second world. (A second world war.) The pictures that shock us, that would shock us again if we could see them again for the first time, would not have shocked the inhabitants of the Nazi world, because within the Nazi world they showed only stations in a sequence, points in a logic. I have observed survivors regard the pictures that made us weep without weeping, without almost any trouble at all. (Before pictures of their first world, which should have been their only world, I have seen almost all of them, in the final sanctuary of their third world, break down badly.)

Consider, moreover, the extra degree of protection provided by the photographs for their being black and white. Imagine the increase in horror and in fear that would result from the attempt to put these scenes—the little boy surrendering to the helmeted troops in the ghetto, the rows of broken bodies stretching across the compound of the camp—into color. That is probably as good a way as any to measure the gulf that divides those who were there from those who were not. Those who were there saw it in color. They saw the tones of the death. Those who were not still have innocent eyes, for which certain colors have not been forever compromised; and their innocence is protected by the shades of the photographs, which cannot show how the sun shone upon what was taking place in its light.

Lanzmann's film begins with shots of Chelmno, near the Narew river in Poland, which was the scene of the Nazis' first effort to destroy the Jews physically. These were the forests through which the gas vans rode, until the men, women, and children within them were dead. Lanzmann's camera lingers long over these trees, these meadows, these clay pits, these roads, as it will linger long over the other scenes (the *mise en mort*, if you will) of

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the Final Solution. And the colors are shocking. The trees are green. The meadows are brown. The clay is red. You realize, almost as if you never realized it before, that the Jews were murdered in a place on earth. Lanzmann's slow, sedulous panning across this lethal landscape marks the collapse of all verbal and visual rhetoric about "the Holocaust." It also inflames in a new way. I thought immediately of David's curse upon the ground where Saul and Jonathan were killed—"Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you. . . ."—and wished that the words had not yet been spoken, that they had been saved for the forests and the fields of Poland. "Ye banks of the Narew. . . ." But Lanzmann shows how futilely they would still be spoken. His film—a nine-hour proof of the proposition that all things human must bend or break before the supreme facticity of the world—shows neither wilderness nor wasteland. There appears to be no trace in nature of what men have done. The seeds sown by the wind have not been repelled by the soil soaked in blood.

Because there is not a single frame of documentary footage in *Shoah*, it is the most original restoration of its subject to consciousness that I have ever seen. Lanzmann has established how much can be accomplished when distance is acknowledged. His film is a profound meditation on the situation of those who came after. It sets out from the premise that, for the purposes of understanding, they are, fortunately for them, forever lost. They (that is, we) can never annul the difference in time and in space that separates them from the event. The presumption that they can, which is what much "Holocaust literature" and "Holocaust film" has presumed, leads only to sentimentality, or to arrogance, or to other kinds of inadvertent numbing. For those who were not there, the holocaust, strictly speaking, never happened. It is dead; always elsewhere. It is "the Holocaust." We cannot "remember" what the Germans did to the Jews, because we cannot remember what we never knew. It is not an unfamiliar predicament for Jewish sons and daughters—which is why it has been a primary intention of Jewish culture throughout the ages to invent precisely a new form of memory, a fortifying fiction that we now know as "collective" memory. ("In every generation every individual must regard himself as if he journeyed out of Egypt": the Jews have made much nourishment out of this philosophical nonsense.)

But there are people for whom there is no "Holocaust," for whom the holocaust is alive; and places where it is always here. Lanzmann's brilliance lay in his decision to find just those people and just those places, in his strict abstention from any other avenues of access. Not to fight against the condition of latecoming, but to seize the people who never, and the places where nobody, alas, came late. He would see them and hear them, to the exclusion of everything else; and, with a cruelty that only collective memory could justify, he would return some of the people to some of the places, so that not even their own healing would stand in the way of Lanzmann's record. In some sense Lanzmann has literally re-assembled the catastrophe. We are shown the sodden woods of Chelmno, the rocky hill of Treblinka, the greening ruins of Auschwitz, as we are told by those who were there what happened there. The juxtaposition of these words and these images adds up to, or at least approximates, the lived experience of the end.

This project—the creation of presence by absence—required a very long movie. In some instances Lanzmann could even dare to reassemble the catastrophe in real time. The "operating vehicles" at Chelmno, for example, did their foul work sufficiently swiftly for Lanzmann's camera to reproduce the full span of the drive, as it follows the same rainy roads at the same remorseless pace. Similarly, in perhaps the most shattering segment of the film, the Jewish barber Abraham Bomba tells of barbering in the women's crematorium in Auschwitz while he barbers in his shop in Tel Aviv; it is not long before the cold, mechanical flexings of his scissors, then and now, in Auschwitz and in Tel Aviv, collapse into a single act, into a single story.

More generally, it was Lanzmann's aim to furnish the viewer with all the first-hand acquaintance that is still available. That meant details. The viewer would have to come to know not the stunning revelations of the history

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books, which take no time at all, but the texture of the event—to come to recognize individual trees and pits and platforms, the lines in the faces of the witnesses and the variety of their voices. It is a chilling measure of the film's success that by the film's end all these recognitions have been made. We have been taken to the catastrophe and left there for nine hours, and after nine hours, as Lanzmann expected, you remember things. *Shoah* has the duration not of spectacle, but of experience.

There is no more lasting effect of this film than the feeling it leaves for the trains. They were the enabling condition for the Nazis and the disabling condition for the Jews. The Final Solution, after all, required the transfer of whole Jewish populations to the killing centers. The trains, then, were everywhere, and they are everywhere in the film. The heavy, mindless, inexorable chugging of cattle cars runs through *Shoah* like the tormenting theme of a nightmare. For the Germans, the efficiency of the transports represented a triumph of bureaucratic rationality. For the Jews, as Lanzmann correctly grasps, the trains were where extermination began. They boarded them living; they left them dead or dying. It was on the trains that the victims were broken down. (Jorge Semprun has written an unforgettable novel about this.) For this reason it was entirely appropriate that the selection for the gas chambers should take place immediately at the end of the line, as the wretched Jews spilled out of the cars. The work of the murder had begun on the way.

Lanzmann's attitude is the opposite of the historical attitude. Not that he is uninterested in the facts; quite the contrary, he is obsessed by them, almost to the point of morbidity. What dissatisfies him about the historian is that he, too, is a latecomer, with a latecomer's aspiration to omniscience. Instead, Lanzmann wants to push the facts back to when they were not yet the facts, to restore them to the state of becoming the facts, when they were fresh to the senses and new to the mind, to reconstitute the ordering of what was happening into a world. Unlike the many writers and filmmakers on "the Holocaust" who seek to transcend history, Lanzmann seeks to precede it. He seeks a sense of contemporaneity.

It is a vain search. Contemporaneity is denied him. But between contemporaneity and history lies a third term, which combines the sentience of the one with the structuring of the other, and that is memory. There is an American Indian superstition according to which a man is not dead until the last man who remembers him dies. That is Lanzmann's feeling about the holocaust. The oxymoronic temporality of his film—the past seems like the present, the present seems like the past—is a perfect reproduction of memory's blurring of the dimensions. Except that, in the case of memory, the blurring has the result of vividness, of saving an existential kind of precision, like a soul saved from the underworld, from oblivion, or from the perfections of narrative. This strange placement in the interstices of the tenses makes it difficult to assign Lanzmann's film to a genre. It has been called a documentary, which it certainly is not. It is just as certainly not a docu-drama. Perhaps it should be called a docu-memory, since it is upon that uncanny faculty for keeping dead things in life that it is entirely based.

There are errors of judgment in the film. Returning Simon Srebnik, forty years later, to the jolly, Jew-hating company of the villagers who tried to kill him is more cruelty than even collective memory can justify; the scandal of Polish anti-Semitism established by this long segment does not exceed the indignity that this survivor is made to endure. Similarly, there is something a little too Montparnassian about Lanzmann's repeated insistence that Abraham Bomba recall his feelings at the sight of the naked women in the gas chamber. The most surprising mistake, however, is the inclusion of Raul Hilberg, the foremost scholar of the destruction of the Jews. With the exception of a riveting scene in which Hilberg decodes a Nazi train schedule for its full, rank, real-world meaning, Hilberg's mood of knowingness (won by immense historical knowledge, to be sure) and distance (the very condition of historical knowledge) is sharply in contradiction to the essence of the film.

Still, these are the lapses of a masterpiece. Lanzmann has gone where nobody has gone before. He has penetrated time, and the privacy of other minds. And, by means of his

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fanaticism for capturing the sensation of being murdered, he has captured, imperishably, with love and with truth, the inner life of the survivors. These are the heroes who live, like black suns, in our midst. Who will forget Abraham Bomba's face, as the full force of what he saw is restored to him, and he pleads for permission to stop remembering? His is a double hell, the hell of the experience and the hell of the memory of the experience. How much easier it might have been, for Bomba and all the thousands of others who were asked by fate to return from Auschwitz to the world, had the world, and not just their extraordinary part of it, really ended. □

Abraham Brumberg

Four years ago, more than halfway into his ten-year labor of producing *Shoah*, Claude Lanzmann published an article in *Les Temps Modernes* (translated in *Dissent*, Spring 1981). This article helps explain what had led him to embark on his arduous task. The Holocaust, he wrote, that "most monstrous crime perpetrated against the Jewish people" and indeed the most monstrous crime "in the history of mankind," was—attempts to explain and assimilate it notwithstanding—in danger of being forgotten. When the Second World War ended, the world seemed to be stunned into the realization that the systematic slaughter of six million Jews was a logically consequential—if unexpected—product of Western history, of "two thousand years of persecution and anti-Jewish hatred," and that anti-Semitism must therefore "be irrevocably banished." No longer. Several decades later, it has arisen "virtually everywhere from its own ashes, wearing its ancient disguises or the more modern, 'democratic' mask of anti-Zionism."

Together with all this came efforts to "reject" the Holocaust, to deny its uniqueness by burying it in a thesis of universal evil, by subsuming it under generalities such as "the horrors of war" or "the victims of fascism," as if "The Final Solution" can be compared to any other atrocities in human history. (Lanzmann returns to this theme in an interview given to *L'Express*, May 16, 1985: "One must not drown the Holocaust into a problem of universal evil. Nor assimilate it into the horrors of war or any other genocide. I reject any such comparison. The Gulag, as abominable as it is, consists of concentration camps, which are not camps of extermination. Children are not gassed there. It is not a long process of patient, bureaucratic, planned destruction of an entire people.")

Lanzmann was appalled especially by the 1979 Hollywood miniseries "*Holocaust*." In its efforts to achieve audience "identification," it distorted the specific character, the "otherness" of the Jewish victims. And in its determination to endow the victims' unimaginable sufferings with "dignity," it succeeded in turning reality into a vulgar caricature, "a lie, a moral crime." ("Only a cast-iron disposition would dare represent what went on in the gas chambers; none of those who entered ever returned to tell us about it.") Nor, Lanzmann adds, have documentaries, with their emphasis on sequential or chronological accounts (from shots of Hitler and Nazi rallies to Bergen-Belsen when the British liberated it) fared much better. For, although the rise of anti-Semitic ideologies in 19th-century Europe, the virulence of the image of the Jew as Christ-killer, and the "seduction of the whole German nation by the 'charming rapist' Hitler" were all necessary preconditions for extermination, "they were not a sufficient condition. . . . The extermination was not 'generated,' and to wish to account for it thus is, in a way, to deny its reality, to shut one's eyes to the outbreak of violence— . . . in a word, to weaken it."

The aim, then, that Lanzmann set for himself was to make us see the quintessence of the"Final Solution"—namely, Death. The implacable and ubiquitous presence of Death, the planning, implementation, and administration of Death, the setting and the locale of Death.

For ten years Lanzmann traveled to Poland, Israel, Germany, and the United States, seeking out and interviewing Jews who had miraculously escaped the Einsatztruppen and the gas; Poles who witnessed the deportations and

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killings; SS men and German bureaucrats who were part of the machinery of death. He filmed Polish villages that existed—and still do—right next to the death camps; the forests, meadows and rivers holding the bones of the executed and the ashes of millions of asphyxiated victims; the railway stations of Treblinka, Sobibor, and Auschwitz (Oswiecim); a crematorium in Auschwitz; homes once occupied by Jews but now—after the Germans expelled the former owners—by Polish farmers; a heap of suitcases that had held the belongings of West European Jews—suitcases abandoned at the entrances to the crematoria. In Israel Lanzmann filmed survivors in their homes, or against bustling street and harbor backgrounds, or—in the case of the participants in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising—in front of the model of the ghetto that stands in Kibbutz Lohame Hagetta'ot ("Kibbutz of the Ghetto Fighters"). The Germans, some of them interviewed with the help of hidden microphones and camera, are ensconced in their *gemütliche* apartments or in hotel rooms.

The result is a nine-and-a-half-hour film, edited from 350 hours of footage. It is a work of shattering beauty and horror, unsurpassed and unforgettable. The film is a remarkable realization of its author's artistic vision, as expressed in the 1981 essay: *Shoah* succeeds in telling the truth about the extermination of the Jews, in a manner never ventured before.

There is no archival footage dating back to the period of the Holocaust. There is no facile chronology. The film begins with the story of Simon Srebnik, one of the two Jews who survived the murder of 400,000 Jews in the village of Chelmno, 40 miles northeast of Lodz. (That is not, incidentally, a misprint: two survived, by chance, out of 400,000.) The film ends with the tale of one of the surviving leaders of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising; its last haunting image is of a train rolling down the tracks. The central subject is Death, and its leitmotif is the utter solitude of the victims, as they saw themselves abandoned by most of humanity. (I use the term "leitmotif" deliberately. One French critic compared the construction of *Shoah* to "a series of Bach fugues; each initial theme is repeated by several voices and becomes modified without ceasing to be recognizable; the conjoined voices create new, unexpected harmonies." *Le Nouvel Observateur*, April 26, 1985.)

Shoah is at once rooted in the past and in the present. It is precisely this conjunction of now and then, as well as the fusing of words and images, that constitute one of Lanzmann's most arresting achievements, for he makes us aware that the Holocaust did not take place in the dim recesses of history, is not something lodged only in the memories of its victims and their executioners, but that it remains part of our own reality. The matching of image and word is suggestive; a walk through a forest in Israel with a survivor from Vilna who recalls the woods of Ponar, near his native city, where he was forced to disinter, with his bare hands, some of the 90,000 Jews executed by the Nazis' Einsatztruppen ("the Germans made us refer to the bodies as *Figuren* . . . or as *Schmattes*, which means 'rags'—anyone who said 'corpse' or 'victim' was beaten").

Today's Ruhr, with its smokestacks puffing and Saurer trucks speeding down the Autobahn, provides the chilling backdrop to Lanzmann's voice as he reads the text of a secret Nazi memorandum to the Saurer works, ordering them to redesign the gas vans so that the "loads" could be more efficaciously "processed." ("The drainhole's cover . . . should be equipped with a slanting trap, so that fluids . . . can drain off during the operation. . . . ") A woman from Lodz speaks of her parents' death in the ghetto, while the camera pans slowly over the broken-down tombstones in the city's Jewish cemetery. And repeatedly, relentlessly, cattle trains chug down tracks, arriving at or departing from Sobibor, Treblinka, Auschwitz.

Above all, there are the witnesses. They are prodded, cajoled, urged, sometimes almost forced by Lanzmann to give him every single detail, every scrap of information, however seemingly trivial. They are not informants, but the protagonists of a drama who literally relive their past. The takes are long, the words punctuated by silences. Some of the witnesses break down, sobbing, unable to continue. But Lanzmann is implacable: "We have to do it. You know it. I know it's very hard and I apologize, but please, we must go on." They go on.

Shoah leaves not a shadow of doubt about

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the absolutely unprecedented character of the Final Solution, nor about its principal villains: the Nazis, who went about implementing it with a mixture of satanic sadism and icy efficiency. Under Lanzmann's unremitting pressure they protest their innocence, or ignorance, yet avidly provide him with the very details that confirm their guilt. SS Unterscharführer Franz Suchomel, who spent about a year in Treblinka, flaunts his hideous pedantry, emphasizing the essential difference between Auschwitz and Treblinka: the former, he says, was "a factory [while the latter]—keep this in mind!—was a primitive but efficient production line of death." When Lanzmann inquires how it was possible to "process" 18,000 people a day in Treblinka, he demurs: "Herr Lanzmann, that's an exaggeration. Believe me. Twelve thousand to fifteen thousand." And since Herr Lanzmann wants "history," he bursts into a song—not once, but twice!—that Jewish workers in Treblinka were "taught" to sing as they were marched off to their daily rounds. Then, with a smile: "Satisfied? That's unique. No Jew knows that today."

Walter Stier was in charge of many of the "special trains" that sent millions of Jews to extinction. He claims he knew nothing about what happened to his "transports"—after all, "I was strictly a bureaucrat." When Lanzmann expresses his incredulity, Stier refuses to budge. He had "no idea, not the slightest. Like that camp—what was its name? It was in the Oppeln district . . . I've got it: Auschwitz!" Another, Dr. Franz Grassler, deputy commissioner of the Warsaw Ghetto, suffers from similar lapses of memory; moreover, he is something of an amateur psychologist. It is not surprising, he says, that "bad times are repressed," while good times remain in one's memory; hence he recalls "more clearly [his] prewar mountaineering trips than the entire war period and those days in Warsaw." Obligingly, Lanzmann offers to help him remember: for instance, does he recall Dr. Czerniakow, the president of the Judenrat in Warsaw until his suicide in July 1942, whose diary has been published in the West? Dr. Grassler is astonished: "It has been printed? It exists?" And *he* is mentioned in it? He reaches for a pen: "May I take notes? . . . Amazing."

And there is Frau Michelson, who spent several years in Chelmno. Why did she go there? Oh well, she laughs, she wanted to be "useful," she was full of that youthful "pioneering spirit." It was "sad," of course, what happened to those Jews—let's see, how many were gassed? Like Grassler's, her memory is faulty: "Four something. Four hundred thousand, forty thousand . . . ?" Again Lanzmann obliges: "Four hundred thousand." Ah yes, she responds, "Four hundred thousand, yes. I knew it had a four in it." One thing, however, engraved itself indelibly upon her memory—the "primitive sanitary facilities" in Chelmno. Imagine! With the exception of a single privy in the town hall, "there were no toilets there at all. Disastrous!" Of such memories are the minds of murderers made.

The Germans in the film, then, are unspeakable. Their role as the inventors and executors of the methodical extermination of six million Jews emerges from their own words, their "lapses" of memory, their evasive grins. This is amplified by one "non-witness" interviewed by Lanzmann, the American historian Raul Hilberg, whose comments are a masterpiece of scholarly depth and lethal precision. The Germans, he points out, did not have to "invent" much: they had a rich anti-Semitic heritage to draw from—ghettos, marking designations such as the Jewish star, restrictive prohibitions—all of which "had been worked out over the course of more than a thousand years by authorities of the church and by secular governments that followed in their footsteps." The single "great invention" of the Germans was the "Final Solution . . . and that is what made this entire process"—above all, its bureaucratic component—"different from all others that had preceded it." Does Lanzmann realize, for example, that the "special trains," directed with such efficiency by hundreds of Walter Stiers, were actually handled by the official German state travel agency, the Mitteleuropäische Reisebüro? That the agency was ready to ship either tourists to Aegean beaches or Corfu, or Jews to the gas chambers, all at special "excursion rates," with "children under ten going at half-fare and children under four going free?"

The mind reels. □

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Robert Kuttner

Unions, Economic Power & the State

New Problems, New Strategies, as Unions Regroup

Labor unions, most progressives believe, are essential institutions of a democratic industrial society. Particularly in the social democratic model that emerged after World War II unions played a crucial, dual role.

First, of course, unions served as direct instruments of industrial democracy. They fought to democratize the one major institution of modern society to which the revolution of democratic citizenship never extended—the workplace. In the terminology popularized by Richard Freeman and James Medoff, unions enhanced not only workers' bargaining power over wages but also workers' collective "voice."

Second, and just as important, unions served as a prime constituency for a social democratic conception of society, whether that conception was explicitly socialist or reformist. The labor movement sought not only gains for organized workers but embodied a broader moral authority as the advocate of society's nonrich, as the constituency for universalistic social insurance, full-employment policies, and distributive justice. Politically, the unions served as the most loyal voting-bloc backing and financing for the left-of-center party, and as an ideological counterweight to both the claims of the market and the influence of capital in a political democracy whose economic institutions remained fiercely capitalist.

This role of unionism, both in the workplace and in the larger society, has never quite received adequate notice in democratic theory. Most of the attention paid unions, in scholarly and in ideological literature as well as in the public mind, emphasizes unions simply as interest groups, not as servants of democratic aspirations or forces to counterbalance the political influence of capital in a market-oriented democracy.

In the 1980s, unions find themselves in a terrible quandary. The more severely they are undercut, the more difficulty they have playing their outward-looking role as vehicles of democratic citizenship; the weaker they become, the more they look like just another narrow interest group. To continue to play their broader role, unions desperately need to regroup and recast a grand strategy, for it is evident that the conception of unionism operating in America since the 1930s is in deep trouble. And if unions are in trouble, then a democratic left politics is in deep trouble, too.

II

My main purpose here is not to go into great detail about the travails of the labor movement, which I have done elsewhere (see "Can Labor Lead?" *New Republic*, March 12, 1984), but to suggest some avenues of recovery, with particular attention to the role that might be played by the state, in a future progressive national administration.

Let me begin, however, by recapitulating labor's impasse. Unions—throughout the industrial West—are facing declining membership, a context of high unemployment and rapid industrial transition, and diminished public support for their moral authority. They are increasingly seen as a selfish special interest, retarding industrial innovation, serving only union members rather than the wage-earning citizenry in general. As the unions become more isolated, and necessarily more inward-looking, the perception becomes a self-fulfilling prophesy.

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The situation of unions is particularly grim in the United States, for a variety of reasons. Unions in America are concentrated in older manufacturing industries and in the public sector. Thus a period of rapid industrial transition means not only distressing personal dislocations for individual workers and communities but a transition from union to nonunion work forces. The understandable instinct of individual workers to resist industrial rationalization is offset in many countries abroad by creative retraining and labor-market policies. In America, labor's instinctual defensiveness is reinforced by the reality that every shift from low-tech to high-tech, or from industrial to service sector, not only dislocates individual workers but depletes the unionized share of the work force.

Obviously, the long-term solution to this isolation is the old CIO slogan, "Organize the Unorganized." If service and high-tech workers were unionized, industrial transitions would still be disconcerting to individual workers but not devastating to organized labor as a movement. But here unions find themselves up against a decade-long tilt in the structure of labor law against unions and in favor of management, combined with a new militance on the part of business. In effect, the penalties for harassing or firing workers who sign union cards have become so light and the delays so long that the Wagner Act and the National Labor Relations Act are, on balance, impediments to union organization.

The social contract that began in 1935 has in effect collapsed. Under that social contract, as legislated by the Wagner Act, enforced by the militance of industrial unionism, refined by wartime labor-management collaboration, and then reined in by the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act, unions limited their struggle to highly ritualized and legalistic collective bargaining for shares of corporate profits. Unions sought to reinforce worker solidarity and to "take wages out of competition" via industry-wide master contracts, and to defend workers' immediate interests via grievance machinery. Labor renounced any claim to influence the organization of production, the investment of capital, the marketing and design of products, or other aspects of governance or ownership of capital, all of which were reserved as "management prerogatives."

Management, by and large, adopted a course of peaceful coexistence. A generation of corporate managers came to terms with business unionism. Men such as John Dunlop, essentially business-oriented conservatives, could conclude that unions were simply part of the modern landscape, and spend their talents lubricating the industrial-relations machinery. When one thinks of Dunlop, who epitomizes a whole generation of collective bargaining, one thinks of a brilliant broker with a very large rolodex, trusted by the captains of both industry and labor, functioning as a one-man substitute for the institutionalized tripartism that never quite took root in America.

Under the sort of social contract brokered by the John Dunlops, unions renounced more radical goals, such as ownership or direct control of production, in exchange for a rising real wage, a secure, predictable set of work rules, relative job security, and industry's grudging tolerance of organized labor as a social partner.

This social contract—business unionism—depended on the neutrality of government, the tolerance of business and, above all, on the stability of the American economy, especially in basic industries. It gave the labor movement a stake in oligopoly. As long as the U.S. was free from low-wage foreign competition, as long as real productivity increased, and as long as wage increases could be passed along to the public rather than taken out of profits, the bargain worked. Not surprisingly, it enabled workers in such heavily organized industries as auto and steel to win wage increases that far outstripped the average gains.

The collapse of that social contract has left the labor movement vulnerable on all fronts. Workers in heavily unionized industries are under heavy pressure to cut wages in the name of competitiveness, whether competitiveness against low-wage foreign producers as in auto, or against nonunion domestic firms as in steel. Mass layoffs have undercut unions' ability to defend the most basic right of all—job security. Since business unionism was sold to its membership mainly as a force for better wages, benefits, and job security, the sudden inability of unions to deliver any of these objectives has

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left the labor movement unsure of its raison d'être and ideologically disarmed with both the general public and with its own rank and file.

The symptoms of this vulnerability include not only a decline in the unionized share of the work force but an equally serious weakening of solidarity in the labor movement itself. In the concession-bargaining climate, unions have been forced to give up the bedrock institution of worker solidarity, the industry-wide master contract. In auto, the major firms have frankly played off one plant against another, warning that as plants are phased out, only the most productive ones will be retained. Although the semblance of industry-wide wage standards remains, concessions are extracted plant by plant. Workers in industry after industry have accepted "two-tier" contracts, which grandfather established workers but create an underclass of new, younger workers who may never reach previous wage and benefit levels. Not surprisingly, such contracts leave younger workers cynical about unionism.

A further problem is the American labor movement's structural inability to transfer resources from unionized, established industries to emerging industries with little labor presence. In the 1930s, this was accomplished through "organizing committees" such as the Steelworkers Organizing Committee, which soon matured into full-fledged unions. In recent years, only the Farm Workers followed this approach. Today, there is no "high-tech organizing committee," and there is little interest on the part of established unions in pouring massive financial support into campaigns that will not benefit the sponsoring union as an institution.

Instead, there has been a series of costly jurisdictional battles as established unions with declining memberships each rush toward the same occasional "targets of opportunity," such as public-sector workers in states with laws that permit full-fledged collective bargaining. In Ohio, where new state legislation allows full unionization of public employees, the CWA (Communications Workers of America), AFSCME (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees), The National Union of Hospital Workers, and the UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers) all poured scarce energies into campaigns against each other. In addition, as established unions find themselves with shrinking memberships, unions locked into declining industries have wandered into other unions' supposed territory. The Communications Workers, once closely tied to the Bell System, have gone after public employees, annoying AFSCME and SEIU (Service Employees' International Union). The Steelworkers have tried to organize grocery clerks, to the indignation of the UFCW. The UAW (United Automobile Workers) and the Hotel and Restaurant Workers both go after university employees.

Historically, the AFL solved this problem by rigidly delineating turf. Masons did not go after carpenters, and carpenters did not go after boilermakers. The CIO solved this by creating new unions for new industries, and insisting on compulsory arbitration in the case of jurisdictional disputes. Although Article XX of the AFL–CIO constitution prohibits "raiding" of established bargaining units, it has no formal process for awarding one union new organizing territory and keeping rival AFL–CIO affiliates out of each others' way. Given the desperate need to organize new workers, it might be said that the present version of labor federation represents the worst structural aspects of both industrial and craft unionism.

There is little support on the AFL–CIO council for either CIO-style arbitration or AFL-style territoriality. At best, union presidents have been able to negotiate cooperative, multiunion campaigns, in which several unions mount coordinated organizing drives against different local units of a large national company, such as the Beverly nursing homes or Blue Cross/Blue Shield, and negotiate a common set of goals, a pooling of resources, and a division of targets. This strategy, in some cases, seems to pay off handsomely, and it is one of the hopeful rays brightening an otherwise gloomy scene.

III

The top leadership of the labor movement has responded to this impasse in several ways. Looking back 20 years, it is evident that most union leaders initially saw their problem as largely political and largely external: the bal-

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ance of power in the nation had shifted against the labor movement. Business had taken off the gloves. Essentially conservative honest brokers such as John Dunlop could no longer deliver. The structure of the National Labor Relations Act was no longer serving union interests. At first, the grand strategic response of the AFL–CIO nationally was to redouble its efforts in the political arena, in order to right the power imbalance. In the 1960s, with a friendly Congress, labor had narrowly missed winning repeal of the Taft-Hartley provision allowing individual states to opt for "right-to-work" laws. In the middle and late 1970s, labor threw substantial resources into legislative battles to gain common site-picketing legislation, offering to sacrifice wage gains in exchange for better organizing access, and for labor-law reform, in order to put some mild teeth back into the Wagner Act. Both of these campaigns failed, too.

After the defeat of President Carter, who had failed to deliver legislatively and had never been seen as labor's own man, the AFL–CIO's top leadership concluded that nothing would succeed until labor had a real friend in the White House, a goal that had eluded labor since the New Deal. The result was the grand strategy of entering the Democratic primaries, playing the role of kingmaker, and collecting substantial IOUs from the man who, it was hoped, would be the next Democratic president. At the time, Lane Kirkland was concerned lest labor splinter its political influence by having some unions back Walter Mondale and others back Edward Kennedy. When Kennedy pulled out of the race, the AFL–CIO was left, by default, with Mondale, a loyal legislative friend but a far less exciting candidate.

The strategy proved disastrous—not only because Mondale lost badly, but because the whole endeavor reinforced the public image of "labor bosses" attempting to compensate in a smoke-filled room for their dwindling appeal at the workplace. In his own rhetoric, Mondale loyally pressed labor's narrow legislative goals, but in doing so he failed to articulate a plausible case for the broader worth of a strong labor movement as a democratic voice. He was seen as nothing but a toady for the AFL–CIO, which prompted his Democratic opponents most of whom, ironically, had prolabor voting records, to bait labor. In the press accounts, "industrial policy" (which is to say, planning) was interpreted as a benny for Lane Kirkland, not as an economic strategy for America to be weighed on its merits.

As one sometime adviser to the AFL–CIO puts it, "Politically, the AFL–CIO has been like a compulsive gambler playing for a higher and higher stakes. As they watched their influence ebb, they kept betting bigger pots. And they may not have another play to make."

Another response of the Kirkland era was to bolster the labor movement's public-relations capacity. A special assessment was voted at the AFL–CIO's 1981 convention to create a Labor Institute of Public Affairs (LIPA), to sharpen labor's media skills. LIPA produces television programs, conducts polls, and trains local unionists in lobbying and public relations. Again, this exercise is probably useful. But it reflects the same widespread view that labor's woes were mainly external to the labor movement; that the problem was the appearance and not the reality; that the remedy is a better articulation, not a radically different movement.

During the same period, however, some of the AFL–CIO's top leadership, notably Secretary-Treasurer Tom Donahue, began urging more fundamental changes in labor's own strategy. The first fruit of this concern was the blue-ribbon Committee on the Evolution of Work, whose members included the presidents of the major unions and the heads of the AFL–CIO's main departments. The committee published its first report, "The Future of Work," in August 1983, and a final report, "The Changing Situation of Workers and Their Unions," in February of 1985. The two reports are more encouraging for what they acknowledge than for what they have yet accomplished. If nothing else, they legitimate internal self-criticism, and during the committee's two-year life this process provided a forum for a fundamental debate about strategies and tactics. It also provided some breathing space for the young Turks in the labor movement, useful sources of labor energy who are often dismissed as mere "dissidents."

The final report opens the door to radical

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change, but cautiously. To take just one example, the report acknowledges that the labor movement needs a mechanism to draw in the majority of wage-earners who are not represented by collective-bargaining agreements. This is a point made repeatedly by many labor scholars: Wagner Act-style collective bargaining is not the only sort of collective representation one might imagine. A wide range of professional associations serves members' interests by promoting communication, helping to define common concerns, offering training opportunities, publishing wage data, and so forth. Some professional associations, such as nurses' and teachers', have evolved into full-fledged unions. This is also the model of some local high-tech workers' committees, and of the feminist Nine to Five.

The AFL–CIO report endorses "multiple models for representing workers." The report, however, has the most enthusiasm for some new kind of associate membership status, whose initial benefits would be economic: discount insurance policies, cut-rate travel, and other such premiums. This is labor's version of a frequent-flier program, and it is one more reflection of labor's habit of trying to build solidarity on economism. Although a few unions, such as the AFT (American Federation of Teachers), are experimenting with associate membership as a way of reaching individual teachers in states that prohibit collective bargaining for public employees, most unions are lukewarm to the idea. Associate membership raises jurisdictional worries (associate member of what?). Moreover, most unions believe they need the prospect of better fringe benefits as an attraction for full-fledged unionism. The building trades, in particular, are appalled at the prospect of the AFL–CIO offering a nice, union-sponsored package of fringe benefits—to nonunion "associates."

"Workers may be suspicious of some aspects of unionism, but they know unions can deliver benefits," says Charles McDonald, the AFL–CIO's energetic deputy director of organizing and the man in charge of developing the program. Tom Donahue, though personally committed to the idea, also acknowledges its limits. "My mother didn't raise me to be an insurance salesman," he says.

At the same time, the committee report is guardedly receptive to some of the more far-reaching innovations that have bubbled up from labor's base. The report likes the "corporate campaign," a technique of putting pressure on an offending company's financiers, which was invented out of the necessity of the J. P. Stevens organizing drive. Many international unions are skittish about retaining Ray Rogers, the maverick organizer credited with inventing the corporate campaign. But labor's more establishment consultants, such as Victor Kamber, have put their own spin on Rogers' idea—Rogers at one point sued Kamber for appropriating the term "corporate campaign"—and the AFL–CIO has the beginning of a corporate-campaign capacity, in-house.

The report also proposes a pilot project to try out 1930s-style organizing committees; it acknowledges its problem with jurisdictional rivalries in organizing campaigns; it suggests more rank-and-file involvement in organizing, and taken as a whole it suggests a movement open to change. Remarkably enough, it closes with a quote from one Eugene Victor Debs: "Ten thousand times has the labor movement stumbled and bruised itself. . . ."

IV

Elsewhere, mostly at the grass roots, the pressure of concession bargaining, paradoxically, has led some unions to move well beyond business unionism, and to grope toward a wholly different conception of unionism that could solve some of labor's problems in the larger society as well as at the workplace. For lack of a better term this strategy might be called power sharing, and it needs to be understood primarily as a capital strategy. With this approach, the union becomes a virtual co-manager, and sometimes a co-owner, of the company. This approach turns business unionism on its head. It recognizes that being bought off with periodic wage increases is no longer in the cards and that business unionism no longer even guarantees job security. Power sharing reclaims all of the concerns that were bargained away as "management prerogatives," and it empowers the rank and file to become intimately involved in management.

One must be very careful to define and

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qualify this approach, because, superficially, it resembles the "American Plan" of the 1920s, with its profit sharing, suggestion boxes, and company unions. It also can be confused with some modern versions of employee involvement used to keep unions out or to weaken those that exist. The key test, I would suggest, is whether a co-determination bargain reflects a union-designed strategy that leads to real empowerment.

For years, unions have looked at their latent economic power, and wondered how to mobilize it. Workers own but do not control hundreds of billions of dollars of pension funds. Unions have occasionally owned banks; these banks have sometimes been abused, as have a few union pension funds. The AFL–CIO has been creeping up on the potential of pensions. It has commissioned reports, and it has begun to computerize data on pension funds. Some jointly administered pensions, mainly in the building trades, have created investment pools to finance construction projects for union contractors. The New York City bailout can be understood as a strategic use of labor's capital power. And to the extent that labor can do so without violating the Taft-Hartley provision outlawing secondary boycotts, labor has begun to use the leverage of the capital it controls as an organizing tactic—as it did in the J. P. Stevens, Phelps Dodge, Litton, and other "corporate campaigns," where pension-fund managers were warned to sever affiliations with companies that were not bargaining in good faith.

Some unions, such as the Steelworkers, have explicitly pursued a strategy of increasing their financial sophistication; in the Wheeling/Pittsburgh lockout, where an essentially healthy company declared bankruptcy to force wage concessions, the Steelworkers hired Lazard Frères, and fought the company to a standstill.

Most of the labor movement is not yet comfortable with capital strategies. It is significant in this regard that the AFL–CIO Committee on the Evolution of Work studied the insurance industry, with an eye to benefits for workers in their role as consumers, not producers. A more venturesome labor movement might have looked at a labor insurance company the way most of the insurance industry does—as a strategic pool of capital.

The best example of power sharing as a grand strategy is the Eastern Airlines bargain with the Machinists union.* The Eastern model trades wage restraint and work-rule flexibility for 25 percent worker ownership and real day-to-day empowerment. The union gets full access to all company financial data and investment plans, and has something very close to a veto. More affirmatively, a union "contracting-in" committee is involved in all aspects of production, and lead mechanics have regained substantial control over the organization of work. As Randy Barber, a consultant to the Machinists and one of the most astute advocates of a "capital strategy" observes, "the Eastern deal transforms what it means to defend a contract." Like some other employee-involvement bargains, the Eastern/Machinists contract has improved productivity and helped put the company in the black, leading to wage restorations and profit sharing. Eastern, two years after a "concession contract," once again has the highest-paid machinists in the industry, though thanks to substantial productivity gains it does not have the highest labor costs.

Unlike ordinary concession bargaining or ordinary profit sharing and quality-of-worklife programs, Eastern has undergone a substantial shift in the distribution of power. The value of this approach transcends merely a concession-bargaining situation. It equates the union, in the minds of the rank and file and a broader public, with innovation, productivity, and good management. It gives the union a constructive avenue to prove what unions have always contended—that the worker really is smarter than the supervisor, and a whole lot smarter than the accountants.

As other such opportunities, like the UAW–Saturn deal, present themselves, it remains to be seen whether unions will have sufficient power and imagination to take advantage of them. To be sure, there is justifiable skepticism of this approach, and criticism is heard on both the labor right and the labor left. Traditional

* See the author's "Power Sharing at Eastern Airlines," *Harvard Business Review*, November–December 1985.

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business unionists find it too radical a departure; the left finds it too collaborative. Writing in the *Harvard Business Review*, Barbara Riesman and Lance Compa, both veterans of the militant United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers (UE), warned that

> the adversarial character of American labor-management relations is organic to an economic system propelled by hard-driving managers seeking to maximize profits. . . . To ask workers to loosen their bonds to the union and tighten those to the company under the rubric of labor-management cooperation is to ask them to break faith with one another.*

Power sharing is suspect because it turns the worker into a petit bourgeois, and at best it accepts something labor has always opposed—enterprise unionism. Arguably, even an Eastern agreement that includes substantial ownership and real empowerment pushes workers to identify their interests with those of the company rather than with other machinists. Yet enterprise bargaining is here anyway. And even the most militant sort of business unionism requires a company healthy enough to generate profits to bargain over. In asking whether such deals as Eastern are good for labor solidarity, one must ask, Compared to what?

The labor left is also deeply skeptical of this approach because it seems to defy a basic law of physics—that you can't get more power out of a situation than you can bring into it. The source of power, in this view, is shop-floor struggle; without the fundamentally adversarial relationship that Riesman and Compa cherish, class consciousness and worker solidarity melt away. One might say, after Churchill, that if Eastern was an opportunity in disguise, it was certainly well-disguised. Deals like Eastern admittedly arise because labor is weak, not because it is strong. How indeed could a version of concession bargaining, no matter how well disguised, lead to a strengthened union?

But I am attracted to bargains like Eastern precisely because they defy the laws of physics (and of business unionism). They create a kind of affirmative power that proves far more durable and liberating than the negative power of traditional unionism. The power to peer into company books, to remove a whole layer of supervisors, to make sure that production is organized and capital is invested in the interest of production workers as well as stockholders is a far more durable power than the power to make life miserable for the boss. It is a dynamic sort of power that breeds more power. District 100 of the Machinists was always a fairly militant union. Today it is more militant—and more effective.

V

Let us assume, based on the foregoing, that business unionism is dead; that to flourish in the current economic climate unions must acquire much greater economic influence both as an organizing strategy and as a representational strategy to defend organized workers; and that unions are in a period of their history when they will do better emphasizing their function as an agency of democratic worker "voice" rather than as a force for narrow wage gains. Let us look at "corporate campaigns," labor's growing interest in pension-fund power, worker buyouts, and co-determination deals like Eastern, as all of a piece.

Let us further suppose, if this doesn't strain credulity utterly, that a progressive administration will eventually regain the White House. What might such an administration do to help the labor movement reinvent itself?

Until the 1930s, the "voluntarist" AFL was quite wary of state involvement. The AFL was skeptical about a welfare state, and it did not even endorse unemployment insurance until the depths of the Great Depression. The CIO had a rather different view. But the view that the state ought to play a minimalist role in industrial relations, except as honest broker, remains the mainstream view in America. There is no substantial tradition of tripartism, or of an incomes policy, of works councils, or of other legislated labor-management systems other than collective bargaining itself.

Most labor leaders would say that the single most important thing the state owes the labor movement is a level playing field—that the

* Barbara Riesman and Lance Compa, "The Case for Adversarial Unions," *Harvard Business Review*, May–June 1985, p. 22.

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only thing that needs to be reinvented is the Wagner Act. Management's ability to retaliate, almost at will, against workers who sign union cards has amounted to a de facto repeal of the Wagner Act. In the nearly eight years since the Carter administration failed to reform labor law, the situation has been worsened by the Reagan NLRB, which is overtly antiunion.

Advocates of labor-law reform point to the Canadian experience. Labor law in Canada is administered at the provincial level. In eastern Canada, certification of the union is automatic once 55 percent of workers have signed cards. In western Canada an election is held to certify the union as bargaining agent, within a week or two once the cards have been filed. In the United States there is a long delay before the election, during which prounion workers can be harassed, intimidated, bought off, or fired.

Paul Weiler, a Canadian teaching labor law at Harvard, is the most prominent advocate of a Canadian-style system as the remedy to the holes in the Wagner Act. Weiler acknowledges that the political prospects of such a reform are presently slender indeed; as a second best he suggests that unions experiment with different strategies for representing worker interests, some of which simply ignore the structure of labor law altogether. Weiler, who was a consultant to the AFL–CIO Committee on the Evolution of Work, likes the professional-association model, which at some point simply grows into a union.

Certainly, labor-law reform should be a central goal of the next progressive administration. But there are also many other things an administration might do to enhance the sophistication of labor, particularly in this new economic era in which capital strategies will matter as much as traditional bread-and-butter unionism.

First, the government could use its influence to embolden labor's tentative reassertion of what used to be dismissed as management prerogatives. This has the immense value of putting the union on the side of productivity, and of reminding both the labor rank and file and public opinion generally that the worker often does know more than the boss. Lately the incompetence and the short-run, quarterly-balance-sheet mentality of American management has been widely acknowledged. But to read the mainstream debates about how to remedy this, one would think that the choice is either to tolerate managerial ineptitude or look for redress to such corporate raiders as Carl Icahn and T. Boone Pickens.

There is of course a third actor, with a much greater interest in the long-run health of the enterprise, and that is the work force. The federal government ought to devote some resources toward creating labor-management experiments that allow the hidden competence of the work force to come to full flower, and in the process to rebuild unionism as an institution. (If this be "enterprise unionism," let us make the most of it!)

The Labor Department has a small division on cooperative labor-management programs. It is now headed by Deputy Undersecretary Steven Schlossberg, a former UAW official who was brought in to rebuild the Reagan administration's shattered bridges to the labor movement when William Brock replaced Labor Secretary Raymond Donovan. The office's resources are very meager at present, thanks to the Reagan budget priorities, and its work must be cloaked in a Republican-sounding version of collaboration. But under a more venturesome and prolabor administration, one could imagine a program of grants to support pilot labor-management arrangements whose frank purpose would be to increase the managerial and financial sophistication of unions and to devise home-grown models of co-determination.

There is an intriguing precedent for this approach, limited to the area of occupational safety and health, which was pioneered during the Carter administration. Under Labor Secretary Ray Marshall and Basil Whiting, assistant administrator of OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration), the Labor Department devised a program of "New Directions" grants. At the time, OSHA suffered from a terrible reputation of being bureaucratically onerous to industry, and too myopically afflicted with a rulebook mentality to be very effective for labor. Whiting, a former Ford Foundation executive, suggested using some public money to increase labor's competence and sophistication in health and safety matters

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as an alternative to more policing. "At the time, the expertise was all one-sided," Whiting recalls. "There were a grand total of six industrial hygienists in the entire labor movement. If a union saw a problem, its only recourse was to call the cops. But you can't have good health and safety just by relying on the cops, and you'll never have enough cops."

Labor Department grants went to train and subsidize industrial hygienists on union staffs, to sponsor joint labor-management reviews to improve health and safety, and to pay the cost of union "Cosh" (Committee on Safety and Health) initiatives.

The New Directions budget was $10–15 million a year. According to Whiting, the initial reaction of some union officials was: "If the government has a spare $10 million to spend on health and safety, why don't they hire another 100 inspectors?" But unionists soon saw that in health and safety, as in other arenas, knowledge is power. By becoming more knowledgeable about health and safety, trade unionists inevitably found themselves tackling not just palliative issues like safety equipment and ambient toxic levels, but issues of plant design, work organization, and capital investment. Which is to say, "management prerogatives."

The New Directions program died with the Carter administration, before it had a chance to take the next logical step. In other industrial nations, with Sweden pioneering, trade unionists are the front line of health and safety enforcement. Government inspectors continue as a backup; they are called in when labor and management reach an impasse, and they occasionally do spot checks. But Swedish unionists find that their own highly trained health-and-safety teams are far more reliable than an army of bureaucrats. And of course union responsibility for health and safety adds to the union's authority and stature generally. Thus, allowing the union to play an expanded role in health and safety enforcement is a version of what André Gorz has called a "nonreformist reform"—a seemingly incremental step whose logic fundamentally changes power relationships.

Government funds might be used to train unionists to play a variety of management roles, going far beyond health and safety, and in the process make labor a genuine social partner. A few unions, such as the Bricklayers, ACTWU (Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers' Union) and the ILGWU (International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union), have perceived the potential of working with their industry counterparts to develop new technologies. The Bricklayers co-sponsor a masonry institute. The ACTWU and ILGWU have a joint program with industry to develop automated apparel technologies. Unions conventionally are seen as enemies of automation, but in this case the needle-trades unions have perceived that if advanced technologies and higher productivity can keep some jobs in the U.S., it is preferable to losing the entire industry to cheap labor. The apparel project, which also dates to the Carter administration, has a small Commerce Department grant, and this is another practical case of tripartism that allows labor to play an outward-looking role, and increase its sophistication about producing technologies, capital investment, and industrial strategies at the same time.

The Carter administration did experiment with tripartism in a number of guises. During the period of double-digit inflation, when labor costs were seen as a major ingredient in price increases, it was thought that government could help broker a "national accord," in which labor would trade off some wage gains for other institutional objectives, such as job security, enhanced collective-bargaining access, trade protection, and industrial policies for industries in transition. Carter-style tripartism failed, in part because industry wouldn't deliver its part of the bargain, in part because the Carter administration itself was divided on the wisdom of the approach. A tripartite committee on steel performed useful work for a time, but industry refused to agree to reinvest substantial capital in steel modernization as its part of the deal. An industrial revitalization bank was proposed, but was killed by the Administration's own officials at Treasury, OMB, and the Council of Economic Advisers.

Tripartite institutions are immensely useful, because they allow labor a seat at the table and, even more important, they force labor to play a forward-looking role; they invite labor to

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become better informed about industrial policy issues. Even in industries with weak labor presence, having a labor seat to fill demonstrates that a union or a preunion organization has a useful function. As the AFL–CIO's Committee on Work Organization hints, the next Democratic administration should experiment with a wide variety of tripartite institutions.

This, of course, will be even more difficult during a period when labor is on the defensive. As Quinn Mills, a labor specialist at the Harvard Business School, observes, "In 1978, the political center warmed to the idea of a 'national accord' in the context of a concern about how we domesticate union power. The situation today is entirely different. The trade-offs arise in a context not of domesticating a labor movement but of reinventing one."

Another area where the state might help the labor movement to play a more important role is the now fashionable arena of job training and retraining. Here the picture is quite mixed. Apprenticeship offers a model in which unions are directly involved in the structuring of labor markets and the training of workers. Apprenticeship in America, however, has been limited to a relatively small number of skilled trades, and it receives little public subsidy. The new job-training and retraining programs have not gone out of their way to involve unions as institutions.

Labor unions, understandably, are ambivalent about training programs. Where the union can control them, they are welcome. Otherwise, they are sometimes feared as sources of cheap, surplus labor. In practice, the government's job-training programs have been a hodgepodge, and some have involved unions, while others have not. Some Job Corps camps were actually run by unions; some retraining contracts have been union-directed.

On the other hand, the crippling limitations in CETA (the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act) were the result of the failure of the Congress, the Carter administration, and the public-sector unions to agree on a formula that would both help new workers and protect career public employees from low-wage competition. As a result, unions played only a limited role in the CETA public-service employment program when their role might have been central, and the failure to broker such a deal seeded the flaws in the program, which proved politically fatal.

Similarly, the Reagan administration's new Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), the on-the-cheap successor to CETA, is advertised as a partnership; but in most communities it is just bipartite—business and government—not tripartite. Several innovative training initiatives, which might have involved unions, do not. JTPA, at least, allows unions and companies to obtain funds for jointly designed programs. (In contrast, the Trade Readjustment Act of the 1970s, which paid workers idled by imports, turned into a buy-off rather than a retraining program.)

In the auto industry, the UAW has pioneered joint labor-management programs, both to upgrade the skills of workers and to train workers for new nonauto jobs in anticipation of the industry's further automation. There are other examples of pioneering "lifetime learning" and career upgrading programs directly

Outrageous

One out of every six millionaires pays little or no income tax, according to a new study by the Treasury Department. The study finds that 5,395 people who earned more than $1 million paid less than a 10 percent federal income tax in 1983. In fact, 2,225 millionaires—one out of every nine—had a tax liability of less than 5 percent. And some 300 Americans paid zero income tax despite incomes in 1983 above $1 million.

Millionaires, of course, aren't the only ones who twist the tax code to personal advantage. Nearly 30,000 households with incomes above $250,000 managed to pay a tax of less than 5 percent, and 1,900 such households paid no tax whatsoever. By comparison, the average American family pays a federal income tax of 13 percent.

The Treasury study concludes that tax shelters in oil and gas and in real estate are the major reasons for the large-scale tax avoidance among America's wealthy.

—From *People & Taxes*, August 1985 □

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sponsored by unions, such as the SEIU's (Service Employees' International Union's) Lifelong Education and Development program, which is designed for relatively low-level health-care, clerical, and janitorial employees. This effort, too, began with a Labor Department grant (in 1979), but funds have dried up under the Reagan administration.

Much of the management personnel literature concludes that few companies pay systematic attention to their "internal labor markets," that is, efforts to encourage their low-level employees to advance. Fulfilling this function is a very natural role for trade unions, one that can improve both their image and the substance of their activities with the broad public and the rank and file. It is another case where the union must do the job, but the state must provide extra resources. One could imagine a pool of public money reserved for joint labor-management projects of career upgrading and lifetime learning.

In some future administration, one could also imagine job-training money being targeted to employee-run ventures, or used to teach co-determination to trade unionists. I know of one worker-run enterprise that actually managed to get some JTPA training slots, but this was because of some clever local grantsmanship, not thanks to a policy priority.

Finally, there is a whole range of laws that function as de facto obstacles to co-determination and capital strategies on the part of labor. Unions have only limited authority over pension funds. The Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) tax preference allows companies to set up ESOPs that nominally confer a degree of worker ownership, without passing through voting rights in the stock. ESOPs are now notoriously unregulated with regard to their governance structure; it is possible for management to manipulate an ESOP in order to take a company private; management can also use an ESOP to give different classes of shareholders different voting power, and even to terminate a regular pension plan.

The basic problem with the ESOP legislation is that it was never intended to bring about broad worker ownership, let alone worker empowerment, but only a very mild form of token profit sharing coupled with a tax preference to lower management's cost of capital. That tax preference will cost the other taxpayers $2.5 billion in 1986, and an estimated $4.4 billion by 1991. This amount of tax subsidy, if it is continued, ought to be used to promote authentic worker ownership, preferably with direct union involvement; reform is indicated.

In general, American labor law presumes an adversary relationship that precludes unions playing a role in management. The "duty of fair representation" doctrine places the unionist who serves on a company board in a conflict of interest, and actually makes him vulnerable to worker lawsuits. There is no legal structure for co-determination in American labor law, and such deals as the Eastern Airlines contract with the Machinists must be handcrafted, one company at a time. Even fairly modest quality-of-worklife programs risk falling afoul of the Wagner Act, whose prohibition of company unions limits management involvement in any "labor organization." *

The law is also very murky on the issue of how unions may wield their economic power. There is one loophole in the Taft-Hartley Act's ban on secondary boycotts. Nothing in the act may interfere with free speech, and the "corporate campaign," so far, has been able to crawl through this loophole. A union campaign against an insurance company that is financing a law-breaking employer is not considered a secondary boycott under Taft-Hartley. On the other hand, union pension funds are subject to strict "prudent-man" rules under the Employee Retirement Investment Security Act (ERISA), and unions are not supposed to use pension funds for purposes other than maximization of return. When the Steelworkers, for example, as part of the campaign against Phelps Dodge, urged other unions to fire Manufacturers Hanover as their pension-fund manager, brother and sister unions were advised by counsel not to declare they were replacing Manny Hanny because of the bank's ties to Phelps Dodge. They could only point to the bank's pension-fund management performance, which was conveniently mediocre. A

* See Donna Sockell, "The Legality of Employee-Participation Programs in Unionized Firms," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, July 1984.

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national administration serious about a new unionism would reform the law to allow greater union use of union economic resources, and would use public resources to help engender a broader labor role.

VI

Obviously, most of the rejuvenation of the labor movement will begin in that movement itself. It will include both new strategies for organizing the unorganized, and for strategically wielding the economic power that labor has but does not use. The combination of these twin approaches will produce something very different from the business unionism that flourished for three decades after World War II. It will involve a new generation of trade unionists, and there are some hopeful signs that the entrenched leaders in at least some unions are making room for new leadership. If nothing else, circumstances are forcing experimentation.

The state, I have argued, also has a very important role to play, as a midwife. Elsewhere in the industrial world, unions have relied on the state to give them some institutional legitimacy but not to do their bargaining for them. In several of the nations with the most effective union movements, such as Sweden, Austria, and West Germany, unions have preferred to work out their bargains with industry directly, without a strong bargaining role for the state, which enters only when there are bargaining impasses. But the state does play a crucial role, via public policy and legal framework, in creating institutions that allow labor to function as a fruitful social partner. In Germany, where works councils are a well-established part of the industrial system, it would be inconceivable for public debate to recognize only two parties to a takeover dispute, management and shareholders.

Fifty years ago, when President Roosevelt signed the Wagner Act, it provided an already resurgent labor movement with legal standing and political running room. John L. Lewis could say, with only slight exaggeration, "President Roosevelt wants you to join the union." The task today is harder; it is not to legally recognize and channel a power that has established itself de facto, but to help rebuild the movement itself. Yet the re-creation of a social contract between industry, labor, government, and society is essential, not just to build industrial democracy, but to assure that industrial nations remain democracies. □

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Nicolaus Mills

War in Tug River Valley

A Long and Bitter Miners' Strike

Drive down Route 49 as it takes you through the coalfields of southern West Virginia and into Kentucky, and what catches your eye before anything else is the beauty of the land. Even in the late summer the trees are dark-green, and after a rain the mist rising out of the mountains hovers between the clouds and the tree line like smoke wrapped around long invisible strings.

This is a landscape of incongruities. A golf course close by a train yard. The white mansions and rolling lawns of coal executives not far from the trailer homes of coal workers. Then, just after the Sprouse Creek Processing Plant, the signs begin to hit you. "Americans are Free, Scabs Go Home." "Welcome to Poland." "Ayatollah Massey." Cross over to the Kentucky side of the Tug River, and the signs become small billboards. "Don't Sell Out Like a Fool," one says, and next to the inscription is a cartoon scab dressed in a green Santa Claus suit. Around his feet, a ball and chain. In his right hand, a skull and bones. In his left hand, dollar bills.

What has changed the landscape of the Tug River Valley is a strike by the United Mine Workers against A. T. Massey, the nation's sixth largest coal producer, which has been going on since October 1984.

It is not just a strike the mine workers are engaged in. It is a war like the mine wars that occurred here over 60 years ago when the UMW was struggling for recognition in southern West Virginia. At that time Mingo County acquired the name "Bloody Mingo," and the mine workers of West Virginia fought gun battles with the Baldwin-Felts detective agency as well as with the West Virginia state police. Not until the 1921 Battle of Blair Mountain, where an estimated 10,000 armed miners—the largest insurrection since the Civil War—surrendered to U.S. Army troops was the UMW stopped in its effort to unionize southern West Virginia. This time the war the UMW is caught up in is best described in terms of Vietnam rather than World War I.

With its $200,000 per month "security" budget, Massey Coal has bought the kinds of equipment—helicopters, an armored personnel carrier—that one associates with a military operation. Like the American army in Vietnam, Massey has been able to alter the countryside, to put in place its own version of a strategic-hamlets program. Drive by a Massey coal mine during the day, and you see miles of chain-link fences and cement observation posts manned by uniformed guards with cameras. At night the same mine sites, illuminated by flood lights, dominate the hills around them, while guards with CB radios note every car that stops.

The striking mine workers are the guerrilla enemy to be overcome. On the company grounds trailers have been set up to provide housing for security guards afraid to live in the prounion towns and hollows surrounding the Massey mines. Months ago, when tension ran particularly high, the Chicago-based firm of Gardner Stern, Jr., a company that specializes in "scab catering," helicoptered in hot meals for the Massey guards. Now with injunctions and fines limiting UMW pickets, Stern's catering is gone, but traffic still moves in and out of the mines like a military operation. The most vulnerable of the new Massey employees, the coal haulers, do not dare drive at night nor in

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trucks unprotected by bullet-proof plastic across their windshields. The most frightened, they are also the most dangerous of the Massey strikebreakers, the ones you most often see brandishing weapons. The few truckers willing to drive alone barrel across backroads at tremendous speed. The rest travel in convoys, on the Kentucky side counting on state troopers to ride shotgun for them, on the West Virginia side relying on luck and Massey security guards.

THE STRIKE STEMS from a decision made in late September 1984 by the Richmond-based Massey Coal Company not to sign the labor agreement the UMW reached with the Bituminous Coal Operators Association. That agreement, the first in 20 years without a strike, brought 40 months of peace to much of the industry and gave the UMW added protection against nonunion workers. But from Massey the BCOA agreement elicited a declaration of war. In the future, Massey declared, its unionized subsidiaries would negotiate separately with the UMW. Massey knew the UMW could not accept such a demand. In order to maintain their reemployment and pension rights, miners work on a system that allows them, when a company closes a mine, to move on to another company mine on the basis of their seniority. Without such a transfer system—or paneling system, as it is known in the industry—a miner would, when the coal seam he was working on gave out, go back to the status he had on first entering the mines, and a company could acquire workers for whom it had no pension obligations and to whom it could pay starting rates no matter what their real experience.

Massey has made no secret about what it expects to gain by canceling panel rights. "You can't discipline union miners, and you can't discharge them, so you have to be able to purge your work force of unproductive elements in some way," Don Blankenship, Massey's highest-ranking officer in West Virginia and Kentucky, told reporters last June. Standing firm in its selective strike against Massey Coal is thus crucial for the UMW, which now has 45,000, of its total of 155,000 active members, idled by unemployment. Defeat would accelerate decentralization in the coal industry and signal other producers that Massey's strategy is the way out of pension obligations and union troubles. A victory, on the other hand, would demonstrate the viability of a selective strike strategy as opposed to an industry-wide strike, particularly when backed by a $70 million strike fund. Victory would make it clear that the UMW was not going to let itself fall victim to "a corporate shell game" in which coal producer after coal producer denies responsibility for its subsidiaries.

For the rest of the labor movement the implications of the Massey strike are no less serious. The mismanagement that prompted Wheeling-Pittsburgh to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in its battle with the United Steelworkers does not exist here. Not only have Massey's coal-production capacities risen from 16 million tons per year in 1978 to a current level of 23 million tons; since being taken over in 1980 by Fluor Corporation and Royal Dutch/Shell, the company has acquired cash reserves of $680 million. The Massey strike thus provides a clear test of a union's ability to withstand a company's calculated effort to destroy it, to sacrifice job security for higher investment returns. It is a view that the UMW's supporters in the labor movement, particularly the United Auto Workers (which last August staged a "Motown to Coaltown" rally in which a 217-car caravan brought more than $50,000 in food and clothing to West Virginia), have begun to express with increasing frequency. Among the UMW's rank and file there is also a prevailing belief that, as Bill Davis, president of Local 1440, observed, "Right here the battle for the future of organized labor is being fought for everyone else."

For the UMW the result is a strike that has already been through three distinct stages, and is now in stage four. The opening stage began in October 1984 when, following Massey's refusal to accept overall corporate responsibility for its subsidiaries with UMW contracts, the union went out on selective strike. At the time the UMW was convinced, as its president Richard Trumka, a 36-year-old lawyer and former miner, told a strike rally in early October '84, "It's not going to be a first-round

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knockout." But the union also believed that the strike fund it had been accumulating since 1983 would enable it to support its 1,100 Massey workers for as long as necessary.

As the fall began, events moved ahead smoothly from the UMW's point of view. At the struck Massey mines personal relations between UMW workers and management had in the past been good, and at mines such as Tall Timbers, which in 1983 set production records, the relationship had been even better, with the company lavishing year-end bonuses on its workers. Throughout the fall strikers posted at the Massey mines kept up friendly relations with the salaried Massey employees who continued working. UMW members were not about to cross their own picket lines and until January '85 Massey made no attempt to bring in strikebreakers. The only hints of trouble were the armed guards Massey began hiring in mid-December and the company's request, granted January 2 by Mingo County Judge Elliott Maynard, for an injunction limiting the number of UMW pickets at a series of mines.

THE FIRST INDICATION that the calm of stage one of the strike was over came on January 24, when a bus bringing in what UMW pickets judged to be nonunion miners and Massey claimed was beefed-up security, was stopped by 200 strikers at the entrance to Big Bear Mines. Trucks carrying mattresses and a portable food-service unit made it through the gates at Big Bear, but the bus turned back.

Then, 18 days later, Massey announced that a trucking firm had been hired to haul stockpiles of coal to its processing plant at Sprouse Creek, and on February 12, one day after the hauling began, the strike exploded into a confrontation that would characterize its second stage. On this second day of hauling coal, between 300 and 500 pickets were waiting for the coal trucks and the security-guard escort, and when the dust cleared, the company backed down again. On Wednesday Massey announced there would be no work for nonunion employees at Sprouse Creek, Rocky Hollow, or Rawl Sales. Tuesday's confrontation had, however, set off shock waves throughout the state. In West Virginia the media discovered a major story, and Governor Arch Moore announced that more state police would be sent to Mingo County.

For the remainder of that week in February '85, no coal moved at any of the struck Massey mines; but with the spotlight now turned on Mingo County and additional police on the scene, Massey made a second try at breaking the strike. James Slater, president of the Sprouse Creek Processing Company, ran ads in the local paper announcing that on February 18 Massey would begin hiring new workers to replace any UMW employees who did not report for work at Sprouse Creek by 7:30 that morning. Given the clashes that had stopped coal delivery the week before, this announcement could only be expected to heighten tension.

The union's answer was a page from the 1960s—a massive civil-rights-style protest that made business as usual at Sprouse Creek impossible. As ordered, the 48 UMW workers at Sprouse Creek showed up at the company gates. But behind them, stretching a quarter-mile down the road, were more than 800 other UMW strikers, singing, "We Shall Not Be Moved." For a union whose members still wear baseball hats that say, "God, Guns, and Guts Built the UMWA," it was an unprecedented strategy, and on Tuesday, when another massive turnout, this one joined by UMW wives, showed up, there was again no activity at Sprouse Creek. On Wednesday, with only 150 pickets on the scene, Massey made a token attempt to run coal, but this time a union sit-down made delivery impossible, and on Thursday, the UMW once again showed up in force. Two lines of strikers, one coming from the east and the other from the west, converged on Sprouse Creek and stopped all coal deliveries. Surprised Massey officials continued to maintain that nothing had changed in their bargaining position, but on February 25, a week after the UMW's civil-rights-style protests, the company was at the bargaining table seriously negotiating.

At this point, however, the UMW could not afford to remain inactive. For the rest of the month, the union kept up the demonstrations that had changed the tenor of the strike and brought favorable publicity. For Massey, on the other hand, it was a time to salvage what it

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could. On February 28 the company's lawyers were back in court, this time asking Judge Maynard for a stricter injunction against UMW picketing and for a contempt ruling on the basis of damage UMW strikers had allegedly caused. But with the UMW and Massey at the bargaining table and Governor Arch Moore working to settle the strike, the judge chose to delay ruling on Massey's requests.

By March it seemed that the strike, now in its sixth month, might at last be resolved. Massey continued making sporadic attempts to haul coal, but each time it was thwarted. On March 4 UMW strikers stopped trains from leaving the Sprouse Creek plant by walking along the rails, and the following week, when Massey tried to haul coal by truck, the UMW unveiled a new tactic—the "serpentine." Parking cars and vans in a serpentine pattern along the road leading to Sprouse Creek, the UMW strikers made coal delivery impossible. There was nothing for the haulers Massey had hired to do except remain locked inside their trucks as demonstrators milled around them.

This was, however, the last week the UMW would be able to control the strike by using nonviolent protest. On Wednesday March 13, with more than 100 Kentucky police providing convoy protection and Massey security guards and helicopters on the scene, the company hauled coal in quantity for the first time since the strike began. Stage two was over; stage three had started.

AGAIN THE UMW COUNTERED WITH BLOCKADES, but this time the nonviolent tactics were not enough. On Thursday a convoy of coal trucks plowed into 14 UMW vehicles parked along the road leading to Sprouse Creek, and on Friday the violence continued when a coal truck smashed into a car carrying four UMW strikers. Public sympathy for the UMW continued. State Senator Robert Nelson, mindful of the negotiations going on, condemned Massey's effort to run coal. "It's part of their strategy to incite, hoping to win public opinion and gain a legal foothold," Nelson told reporters. "I just hope the mine workers continue what is really a precedent-setting response."

For Massey there was, however, no pulling

Courtesy Marat Moore, *UMW Journal*

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back. On Saturday March 16, in response to a request from the National Labor Relations Board, Federal District Court Judge Robert Staker issued a temporary restraining order banning mass picketing at Sprouse Creek and Rocky Hollow, and the following week Massey hauled more coal than ever during the strike.

For the UMW, which had so carefully put in place its nonviolent campaign, Judge Staker's restraining order, following the assault on its own men, was a double blow. But the worst was yet to come. On March 27 Judge Elliott Maynard announced that for violating his January injunction limiting to 10 the number of pickets allowed at Sprouse Creek and Rocky Hollow, the UMW would be fined $200,000 for the demonstrations it had staged between February 18 and 28.

The UMW was now in its most vulnerable position since the strike began. The irony was that meanwhile negotiations were going so well that for once public events seemed secondary. At a March 22 news conference West Virginia Governor Arch Moore said that "all of the issues" involving West Virginia "are concluded," and a month later UMW President Richard Trumka was just as optimistic. The union and Massey had, he was convinced, "negotiated an agreement in principle." Pickets and supervisors began informal discussions about resuming operations.

Both Governor Moore and UMW President Trumka, it turned out, had been too hopeful. What appeared to be the end of the strike was the start of what has become its fourth stage. With its own security force in place and aided by the most sweeping injunction yet against the UMW—an order issued April 15, 1984, by U.S. District Judge Dennis Knapp forbidding mass picketing at all Massey facilities—Massey felt free to begin hiring nonunion miners to replace UMW miners.

The union could no longer count on the presence of UMW pickets to stop nonunion workers from going down into the mines. Worse still, it could not physically confront Massey in the coalfields without risking fines that would endanger its $70 million strike fund.

Courtesy Marat Moore, *UMW Journal*

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The next UMW battles with Massey would be in the courtroom and in the union's corporate campaign, designed to bring public pressure on the company.

On April 24 the UMW scored its first legal victory. The National Labor Relations Board made a preliminary determination upholding the UMW's contention that Massey was in fact the common employer for all the mine operations it owned. Had it come earlier in the strike, this might have been of more use to the UMW. But even now it was welcome news for the union, which has contended that in the recent past the NLRB had been far more concerned with "addressing employer complaints than the underlying causes of the strike itself." Massey must for the present negotiate as a single employer. Provided the NLRB upholds its preliminary determination, Massey's decentralization strategy will turn out to be an illegal labor practice.

In its corporate campaign against Massey, the UMW has, however, started to make its greatest gains. As the spring began, Massey, which had at one point hired the Charleston public relations firm of Charles Ryan Associates, began to prove surprisingly vulnerable. In mid-April the owner of one of the security firms working for Massey was arrested for importing a pistol with the numbers chiseled off and soliciting an undercover federal agent to break the arms and legs of a UMW organizer. Nine days later photos taken at Massey's Sprouse Creek complex revealed the presence of an armored personnel carrier, an M–113 APC, its turret covered by a tarpaulin. Then, last June, Massey committed an even bigger publicity gaffe when Fluor Corporation, the international engineering firm that is one of Massey's parent companies, asked engineers from mothballed Massey mines in West Virginia to help design a coal-mining complex for mainland China.

Instead of expressing concern over the impact of disinvestment in West Virginia, where the 16 percent unemployment rate is double that of the rest of the country, E. Morgan Massey, president of Massey coal, used the China venture to point up what Massey could do if it did not get its way in West Virginia. "Multinational corporations do not have a great deal of national loyalty and even less loyalty to southern West Virginia," Massey told reporters.

In a state already worried about an international situation that allows foreign coal to be exported for as much as $8 less per ton than American coal, Massey's declaration seemed designed to rub salt into deep wounds. But beyond that, it reflected what at this stage in the strike the UMW sees as Massey's Achilles heel—the image of both its parent companies, Fluor and Royal Dutch/Shell, and that of the giant utilities that buy Massey coal.

The UMW, through its corporate campaign, has pointed up what it means to do business with Massey. Just how vulnerable Massey's utility customers are was made clear last August at the United Auto Workers' "Motown to Coaltown" rally. The UAW, which sees the Massey strike as part of a much broader antiunion drive, made no secret of its anger about the fact that Detroit Edison and Consolidated Power of Michigan are Massey customers; nor did it hide its willingness to do everything it legally could to persuade the two utilities to purchase its coal elsewhere. Even more crucial is the UMW corporate campaign against Fluor and Royal Dutch/Shell. Last June informational leaflets passed out at Shell gas stations in Wheeling had an immediate impact on its customers, who did not hesitate to take their business elsewhere, and for the coming months the UMW is preparing to link its campaign against Fluor and Shell to South African protests throughout the nation. Fluor is responsible for providing technical training to more than 20,000 nonwhite workers in South Africa and for building one of that nation's most modern synthetic fuels plants. Shell owns 50 percent of the Rietspruit mine in South Africa, which employs more than 1,000 workers and produces over 5 million tons of coal for export each year.

FOR A UNION THAT IN THE PAST has relied on short industrywide strikes, this is not an easy position to be in, and it is made all the more difficult by the knowledge that coal still would not be moving in Mingo and Pike counties if Massey were not able to rely on court injunctions and state troopers protecting scabs. The

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UMW is not, however, a union out of touch with political reality. Unlike Great Britain's National Union of Mineworkers, it has not gotten itself into a no-win confrontation with the government, nor has it allowed a split to develop in its ranks between striking and non-striking miners. On the contrary, despite the hardship this strike has caused, the UMW's mood is one of confidence. With its enormous strike fund—its rank and file paid for it with a 2.5 percent assessment of their wages—the UMW has the reserves for a long battle, and with its corporate campaign it can make life hard for Massey's parent companies.

Finally there is the determination of the UMW's strikers in West Virginia and Kentucky. In an era when unemployment is high and unions represent only 19 percent of the labor force, it is fashionable to talk about workers who do not trust their own leaders and for whom solidarity is as remote as the 1930s. But you cannot spend any time in the Tug River Valley without realizing that for the UMW strikers and their families, the battle with Massey has become a mission. They are convinced that their lives have been put in jeopardy by Massey Coal. As one miner put it, "Our families are here, our homes, our jobs. There's no place else to work. They're trying to take everything away from us." The signs along the backroads that compare Massey to the Ayatollah Khomeini and suggest that the coalfields of the Tug River Valley have become like Poland and Iran are not just hyperbole. They go to the feeling the UMW strikers have of being treated not as Americans but as a Third-World population. The poster outside the barbershop of UMW wife Cookie Smith—"God, America, the UMWA—Without These There Can Never Be Freedom"—sums up the way patriotism and the winning of this strike have merged for the mine workers. It is no coincidence that for so many miners army camouflage T-shirts and fatigue pants have become the uniform of the day.

I SPENT AN EVENING WITH PICKETS outside the Samoyard mines in Kentucky. Earlier in the year one of them, Judy Mullins, had been wounded in the hand by shots fired from a passing van, and the men on picket duty that night pointed out the bullet holes in the doorway where she was standing. It was the kind of evidence you would expect a sympathetic reporter to be shown. But there was something more to it as well, and it was driven home to me each time a car passed and we all ducked behind the sandbags that now protect the Samoyard pickets. What I was really being shown was what the bullets hadn't touched: how, if they had created fears, they hadn't created doubts about the strike.

I found the same determination among the strikers' wives. In this one-industry area, there are few two-paycheck families, so out of both necessity and tradition the strikers' wives are deeply involved in what is happening to their husbands. But this strike has brought with it special pressures, and a number of women have begun to meet in small groups to talk about the strike.

The UMW wives know it is necessary to try to shield their children from the frustrations their husbands are feeling, and especially on holidays and birthdays they feel the pain of not having a regular paycheck. But the idea of asking their husbands to back down is never voiced. When the women express anger, it is at the company for the suffering it is causing and for the hate they see rising up in their children, whose frustration often takes the form of "rocking" the trucks of nonunion coal haulers.

How deep these feelings are came through again on August 10, the Saturday before I left, when more than 400 United Auto Workers arrived with food and clothing. With a group of UMW miners and their families, I watched the caravan of UAW cars snake through the West Virginia mountains and cross the Matewan Bridge into Kentucky. Seeing the caravan come through the mountains, watching the cars with their headlights on stretch back along Route 49 as far as the eye could see was terribly moving. The UAW workers did not have to be bringing anything. From the perspective of the mine workers, what mattered was that they had come. They cared. That feeling was reflected in the tears you saw some of the mine workers fighting back, in the cheers, so deeply personal that you heard them

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as individual voices. For the UAW workers, who had been on the road since 8:00 Friday evening and would have to start back for Detroit by early Sunday, it was a moment they had every right to bask in. But as they drew abreast of the Matewan Bridge and saw the response, there was no basking in the role of givers. Rather there was an instant awareness of what their coming meant. The car caravan, which had been moving slowly through the mountains, now came to an almost complete standstill. You could hear people talking back and forth, see others reach out to touch a hand. Without intending to, the UMW miners and their families had for the moment reversed things. By the very intensity of their response they had become the givers.

Later, when I spoke with a group of Auto Workers at a picnic given on their behalf by the UMW, they were still talking about the impact their arrival had had on them. Some UAW men had roots in West Virginia and Kentucky. Jerry Renfro, who had driven the lead car, had been born in Mingo County and remembered realizing as a child one year, "If it hadn't been for the union, there wouldn't have been Christmas." But in the end, it did not matter where any of the Auto Workers had been raised. They had seen what is easy to miss if you think this is an ordinary strike or you are a company manager who believes the remoteness of these coalfields works in your favor. They had come face to face with the fact that in this strike whole families—parents and grandparents and great-grandparents—still talk about life in the Tug River Valley before they had a union. For them that life was humiliating, and when they say they are determined to take no steps backward in this strike, they are not just talking about a contract. They are talking about a time when "the coal companies treated the miners any way they wanted to." □

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Lewis Coser

Remembering the Spanish Revolution

A Memoir of What Happened in 1936

On July 17, 1936, the Spanish army under General Franco revolted against the Spanish Republic. Franco envisaged only a short resistance on the part of the Republic and expected to be installed in power within a few days. His expectations proved illusory. In fact, one of the key army leaders, General Mola, concluded by July 20 that the rebels' cause was lost. The *pronunciamento* had been crushed in the most important areas of the country: in Madrid and Barcelona, in the Asturias and the Basque province—indeed, in all the major industrial and commercial centers of the nation. A counteroffensive by hastily created workers' militias and some loyalist army troops soon dislodged the insurgents from key areas. The coup had failed. The Civil War began.

For my generation in the European left, the year 1936 was a watershed. The occupation of the factories by millions of French workers in June 1936 and the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War a month later seemed once and for all to break the despair that had settled on those of us who considered themselves Marxists.

Marx's belief that the working class was the universal class whose action would end the dominance of the bourgeoisie had been largely undermined by a series of crushing defeats. The Nazis had come to power in Germany in early 1933 without any resistance from the working class or its parties. At first, some of us nurtured the illusion that the Nazi reign would soon collapse. Whenever the newspapers reported some dissension in the Nazi leadership or rifts between the Nazis and the army or capitalist interests, we took this as a sign that the death of the beast was in sight. But by early 1936 it was clear, except to the self-deluded, that the Nazis were there to stay. Some hoped for a military overthrow of the Nazis by the Western powers or the Russians; but when Hitler reoccupied the Rhineland in March 1936, neither the Western powers nor the Soviets even mobilized. Not only did Hitler and Mussolini seem strong; fascist or authoritarian regimes also dominated in most of the Balkan countries and in Poland. In February 1934, the Austrian workers had risen against the reactionary regime of Dollfuss's Fatherland Front, but they were quickly defeated. Nowhere else was there even token resistance to totalitarian or authoritarian power.

I HAD COME TO FRANCE in 1933 as a refugee from Nazi Germany. The German refugees, being without roots in France, were even more demoralized in those years of fascist ascendancy than the native socialists. But the French also had reason to worry. In Paris, on February 6 and 7, 1934, the right-wing leagues instigated major riots that came near to toppling the government. Probably only a general strike a week later saved the French Republic.

During the next few years, things improved somewhat. A major shift in Soviet foreign policy favoring an alliance with the Western powers finally led to a Popular Front aligning the French Socialists, the Communists, and the centrist Radical Socialists. In May 1936, the Popular Front won the parliamentary elections and installed the first Léon Blum government. What seemed much more important to us than this parliamentary victory was a spontaneous outbreak of major strikes all over France in June. These strikes led to a mass occupation by

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insurgent workers of factories and sometimes even shops and department stores all over France.

The June events heartened those of us who, usually only in private, had begun to despair of the workers' capacity to become autonomous political actors. The general strike and occupation of the factories came to an end mainly because the government made major concessions, but also because the Communists, who feared that prolonged disorder might weaken the French army as an ally of the Soviet Union, helped stop the strike wave. Barely a month after the occupation of the factories in France, the Spanish workers arose spontaneously to resist the army that had revolted against Republican Spain.

What kindled enormous enthusiasm for the Spanish revolution within the European left was, at least initially, the fact that the Spanish workers acted spontaneously in resisting the coup of the generals. The trade unions—the Anarchist CNT (Confederación Nacional del Trabajo) and the UGT (Unión General de los Trabajadores) that was largely led by Socialist and some Communist militants who most often took the lead. But it seems incontrovertible that the successes of the Spanish left in rebuffing the Franco insurgency were largely owed to an almost instinctive reaction of the working class. Workers procured—often very primitive—weapons by taking over police or military armories, by disarming the police and Civil Guards, or by inciting enlisted men to disarm their officers and come over to the side of the workers.

In Barcelona, but also elsewhere, the workers soon dominated the streets. They occupied and attempted to run the factories and commercial establishments, and they ran utilities and transport. The character of the city soon changed. The Civil Guards and the police were no longer seen on the streets. The bonne bourgeoisie disappeared. Some had been shot, most hid in their apartments. Militiamen with rifles over their backs and revolvers in their belts dominated the street. Luxury restaurants were converted into popular eating places; everywhere there were men and women carrying the flags and emblems of the workers' organizations. The various parties and unions took over the luxury hotels and made them into their headquarters. Each revolutionary organization had its own newspaper and radio station.

Workers' committees sprang up spontaneously. The workers' militia and other hastily created committees dominated the political scene. One hesitates to speak of "dual power" in this respect since in Catalonia, and in some other parts of the country though not everywhere, the governmental apparatus had collapsed, so that the militia committees were now in total command. The Republican cabinet—led by a colorless figure, José Giral—was unable to exercise power beyond the confines of metropolitan Madrid.

For those of us who had almost despaired of the creative powers of the workers, the Spanish events had a heady effect. It seemed "a joy to be alive."

Yet the euphoria of the first days soon dissipated. The Anarchists of the CNT were usually the most heroic fighters, first in the inner cities, and later at the front. But they had all the faults of their great virtues. Discipline was just not their suit. Many of them, after having taken over factories or lands, had not the vaguest idea of what to do with them. Everybody was for collectivization, but some understood this to mean that the workers in particular factories and on confiscated lands would now work for themselves, whereas others warned that they had the responsibility to work for the benefit of the population at large. Some burned churches and killed priests; others were capable of an almost childlike magnanimity.

It would require more space than I have available to analyze the politics of the Anarchists. Suffice it to say that they were in many ways the most appealing political grouping, with the exception of the left-wing socialist POUM (Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista). But the Anarchists were also the most inexperienced, vacillating, and disoriented among the groups on the left. They probably saved the day in the first few weeks of the revolution but later failed to oppose the liquidation of many of the major achievements. They joined the Caballero government that

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succeeded Giral and included Socialists as well as Communists, and hence participated in the restoration of the Republican state, which they had earlier condemned and ridiculed.

(A digression to illustrate the political style of the Anarchists: After the defeat of the revolution, I happened to talk with an Anarchist friend in a Parisian café. He stressed that it had now become clear to him that acts of individual terrorism, such as the Anarchists had favored, were counterproductive. For a few weeks after this conversation he did not come to his customary café table. When he reappeared, I asked where he had been. He then told me in a matter-of-fact tone that the fascist mayor of his village had insulted his mother. When he heard of this, he returned to the village through the fascist lines, killed the mayor, and then managed to regain Paris and his customary café.)

The armed militia forces performed miracles of valor and sacrifice. Yet it happened too often that militiamen simply went home when they got bored with the business at hand. Much of Spain in the first weeks of the Civil War was a cauldron of energies, of heroism, of creative innovation—but also just plain chaos. Clearly, this creative effervescence could not continue for long, else the Franco forces would overrun most of the Republican territory.

The more thoughtful leaders of the left felt that a great deal depended on whether the

As Orwell Saw It . . .

The workers' militias, based on the trade unions and each composed of people of approximately the same political opinions, had the effect of canalizing into one place all the most revolutionary sentiment in the country. I had dropped more or less by chance into the only community of any size in Western Europe where political consciousness and disbelief in capitalism were more normal than their opposites. Up here in Aragon one was among tens of thousands of people, mainly though not entirely of working-class origin, all living at the same level and mingling on terms of equality. In theory it was perfect equality, and even in practice it was not far from it. There is a sense in which it would be true to say that one was experiencing a foretaste of Socialism, by which I mean that the prevailing mental atmosphere was that of Socialism. Many of the normal motives of civilized life—snobbishness, money-grubbing, fear of the boss, etc.—had simply ceased to exist. The ordinary class-division of society had disappeared to an extent that is almost unthinkable in the money-tainted air of England; there was no one there except the peasants and ourselves, and no one owned anyone else as his master. Of course such a state of affairs could not last. It was simply a temporary and local phase in an enormous game that is being played over the whole surface of the earth. But it lasted long enough to have its effect upon anyone who experienced it. However much one cursed at the time, one realized afterwards that one had been in contact with something strange and valuable. One had been in a community where hope was more normal than apathy or cynicism, where the word "comrade" stood for comradeship and not, as in most countries, for humbug. One had breathed the air of equality. I am well aware that it is now the fashion to deny that Socialism has anything to do with equality. In every country in the world a huge tribe of party-hacks and sleek little professors are busy "proving" that Socialism means no more than a planned state-capitalism with the grab-motive left intact. But fortunately there also exists a vision of Socialism quite different from this. The thing that attracts ordinary men to Socialism and makes them willing to risk their skins for it, the "mystique" of Socialism, is the idea of equality; to the vast majority of people Socialism means a classless society, or it means nothing at all. And it was here that those few months in the militia were valuable to me. For the Spanish militias, while they lasted, were a sort of microcosm of a classless society. In that community where no one was on the make, where there was a shortage of everything but no privilege and no boot-licking, one got, perhaps, a crude forecast of what the opening stages of Socialism might be like. And, after all, instead of disillusioning me it deeply attracted me.

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revolution would get support from the outside. But no such support was forthcoming in its first months. Then, in October 1936, Russian arms and military advisers arrived in Spain. With no arms forthcoming from the Western democracies and the Russians being the sole supplier, the fate of the Spanish revolution was sealed. Along with Russian arms and cadres came the Russian "advisers" who infiltrated the various committees and government offices. Where they were unsuccessful, they tried to deprive the committees of all but symbolic power.

The Russians had decided that a radical Spanish revolution would not suit their political aims. They did not relish the idea of having to put up with a new revolutionary center that might compete with the Kremlin. They feared that their overtures to the Western powers on behalf of an anti-Nazi alliance might suffer if the West were scared by a revolutionary policy in Spain. As a result, they moved to liquidate the dual power that had originally characterized revolutionary Spain. In some cases, the same old Bolsheviks, men such as Vladimir Antonov-Ovseenko, who in 1917 had helped build up dual power in Russia to overthrow the Kerensky regime, now helped engineer the official governmental apparatus. (Antonov-Ovseenko, like many of his coworkers, was killed by the GPU soon after coming home from Spain.)

Before the outbreak of the revolution, the Spanish Communist party had been exceedingly weak. In the 1920s, it never had more than a few hundred members. In the 1933 elections, the CP managed to elect only one deputy. Even on the eve of the Civil War, and after a period of intense political activity, the CP had no more than 30,000 members; most of its leaders were political unknowns. Why then did they suddenly gain ascendancy after the early period of the Civil War? This much seems fairly well established: they were seen as the party of the Russians, the only power that helped by sending arms—even though for good money—as well as skilled military advisers.

The Communists pursued a highly consistent course. They supported, and helped to implement, the transformation of the militia into a regular army, largely recruited through conscription. They liquidated the committees that had been the mainstays of revolutionary dual power, and they helped to reconstruct the authority of the Madrid central government. Being too weak to accomplish this by themselves, they "bored from within" the UGT unions, the Socialist party, and the unified Socialist youth movement. At first, they supported the left-wing Socialist leader Largo Caballero, who formed a Popular Front government in September 1936. This government liquidated the popular militias and generally restored the authority of the state. When Largo Caballero began to oppose the Communists and attempted to get rid of their yoke, he was dumped in the summer of 1937 and replaced by more pliable right-wing Socialists who were led by Prieto and Negrín. By that time the militia had been militarized, the police force rebuilt, and the revolutionary gains "legalized."

THE REVOLUTIONARY GAINS and the revolutionary spirit lasted longest in Barcelona. This was the stronghold of the left-socialist POUM. The POUM was relatively small and suffered from the fact that it was largely a Catalonian, not a national, party. But the CP saw the POUM as its prime enemy, since the POUM stood for an ideology close to the doctrines of Lenin and Trotsky and showed up the Communists' departure from revolutionary Marxism.

In May 1937, the CP moved against the POUM, which then was closely allied with a wing of the Anarchists. CNT workers, supported by the POUM, had occupied the telephone exchange for a number of months and the Communists now attempted to take it from them with the help of several trucksful of guards. When the CNT militia refused to budge, barricades went up all over Barcelona. After some fighting in the streets, the central government—largely under the control of the Communists—as well as the Catalonian Generalitat (the regional government) succeeded in reestablishing "order."

The CP, which had slanderously accused the POUM members of being traitors in the pay of Franco, now asked for the suppression of POUM. When Largo Caballero refused to

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comply, he was toppled. The POUM leader Andrés Nin was assassinated, most probably by the GPU. My close friend and political mentor Kurt Landau, the Austrian left Socialist, was likewise assassinated by the GPU, as were several Italian Anarchist theorists and other left militants. After these events, the backbone of the revolutionary forces in Barcelona was broken. Order reigned in Barcelona until it fell to Franco, who then imposed *his* order.

COMMON SENSE WOULD SUGGEST that to fight a modern war against disciplined adversaries requires a disciplined and well-organized military structure. Only after having created a disciplined structure was the Red Army under Trotsky able to defeat its White adversary in the years of the Russian Civil War. But it is also a fact that the Spanish popular uprising of 1808–14 against Joseph Bonaparte, whom his brother Napoleon had installed as king of Spain, was mainly sustained by local juntas and largely fought as a guerrilla war (the term comes from this Spanish insurrection). It inflicted on the French their first defeat in many years.

The high motivation of the soldiers, the will to prevail even against almost insurmountable odds, the heroism of the militia in the first months of the Spanish revolution compensated in considerable degree for the lack of discipline and central planning. It is true that after the militias were disbanded and a new army built on traditional lines took their place, the Spanish Republican forces managed to win a number of victories. Whether their subsequent defeat could have been avoided had the army still been composed of a highly motivated militia is a moot question. In any case, most military observers agreed at the time that the International Brigades, largely made up of ideologically inspired members, were by far the best units on the loyalist, government side. They combined some of the best features of the earlier militia units with an iron discipline imposed by their Communist political commissars.

The Communists were not only the party of the Russians, they were also the party of law and order. They ingratiated themselves with all those who were frightened by the turmoil and disorder on the front and behind it. They cultivated the support of the middle-class and lower-middle-class elements who, while opposed to Franco, were horrified by the "excesses" of the Anarchists. The Communists took over the leadership of the previously largely Socialist UGT union, skillfully exploiting the old competition between UGT and CNT. Above all, the Communists argued with considerable effect that the militias had to be liquidated in favor of a reconstituted regular army operating along traditional, disciplined lines. The Communist party, which had been next to nothing at the outbreak of the Civil War, became "everything" a year later.

THE COMMUNISTS TURNED OUT TO BE the major counterrevolutionary force in Republican Spain. They could play this role because the Western democratic powers refused to help the revolution. Léon Blum seems initially to have had some inclination to help the Spaniards, but when he realized that the British would oppose any kind of pro-Republican intervention, he caved in. In England, on a motion by Sir Walter Citrine, secretary general of the British Trades Union Congress, and Ernest Bevin, secretary of the Transport Workers Union, the British trade-union movement came out against intervention in September 1936. In October, the Labour party conference endorsed nonintervention by a crushing majority.

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The Tory government did not even dream of coming to the aid of a most un-British revolution.

While the democratic camp shed crocodile tears about the helplessness of the revolution but failed completely to come to its aid, the Nazis and the Italians enthusiastically supported Franco. Italian soldiers began reaching Spain in large numbers in November 1936. By the end of the year, 3,000 blackshirts and 1,500 technicians had arrived in Spain. By the middle of January 1937, another 4,000 men had landed. By the end of February 1937, four Italian divisions with roughly 40,000 men moved into the front lines. The Nazis had, of course, less immediate interest in the Mediterranean than Mussolini. They accordingly sent only some 10,000 men, but many of them were highly trained technicians. The Italians and the Nazis provided most of the aircraft on the Franco side, and both delivered sophisticated weaponry that the Franco troops lacked at the beginning. All in all, the fascist nations proved to be dependable allies of Franco. The fascists practiced international solidarity despite their national ideologies. Blum, despite his theoretical internationalism, betrayed it in practice.

It may be that the Spanish revolution would have been defeated in any case, but I firmly believe that the nonintervention policy, to which America also subscribed, led to its death. It was defeated for lack of Western support, which in turn spelled dependence on the Russians, who were determined to liquidate the revolution. It would require a dialectician more subtle than I am to decide who carried the greater responsibility for the defeat of the Spanish Revolution—the West and its labor movement or the Russians; the decent, lovable man that was Léon Blum, or the bloodthirsty monster that was Stalin. The first acted by omission, the second by commission, but both policies spelled defeat.

On March 9, 1939, all resistance ended in Catalonia. On March 28, Franco's troops entered Madrid. The Western powers had refused to intervene in the Spanish Civil War because they felt that intervention might bring a general European war. By September 1, 1939, the Nazis had invaded Poland and two days later Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. World War II had begun.

Further Readings

(a) Eyewitness Accounts:

George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia*, Boston: The Beacon Press, 1952.

Franz Borkenau, *The Spanish Cockpit*, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1963.

(b) Historical Account from a Left-Socialist Perspective:

Pierre Broué and Emile Témine, *The Revolution and the Civil War in Spain*, London: Faber & Faber, 1972. □

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Henry Abelove

Freud, Male Homosexuality, and the Americans

Anybody inquiring about Freud's attitude to homosexuality will soon come across a letter he wrote in April 1935. The letter is now almost famous. It was first printed in 1951; it has been reprinted since many times; and it is conveniently available in Ernest Jones's standard biography. Freud wrote it in English as a courtesy to his correspondent, who was an American, a mother, distressed and embarrassed because her young son was homosexual. What the letter tells her is that she has less cause for distress than she may think and none whatsoever for embarrassment.

> I gather [Freud says] . . . that your son is a homosexual. I am most impressed by the fact that you do not mention this term yourself in your information about him. May I question you, why you avoid it? Homosexuality is assuredly no advantage, but it is nothing to be ashamed of, no vice, no degradation, it cannot be classified as an illness, we consider it to be a variation of the sexual function produced by a certain arrest of sexual development.

He goes on to say more:

> Many highly respectable individuals of ancient and modern times have been homosexuals, several of the greatest men among them. (Plato, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, etc.) It is a great injustice to persecute homosexuality as a crime and a cruelty too. If you do not believe me, read the books of Havelock Ellis.
>
> By asking me if I can help, you mean, I suppose, if I can abolish homosexuality and make normal heterosexuality take its place. The answer is, in a general way, we cannot promise to achieve it. In a certain number of cases we succeed in developing the blighted germs of heterosexual tendencies which are present in every homosexual, in the majority of cases it is no more possible. It is a question of the quality and the age of the individual. The result of treatment cannot be predicted.
>
> What analysis can do for your son runs in a different line. If he is unhappy, neurotic, torn by conflicts, inhibited in his social life, analysis may bring him harmony, peace of mind, full efficiency, whether he remains a homosexual or gets changed. If you make up your mind he should have analysis with me—I don't expect you will—he has to come over to Vienna. I have no intention of leaving here. However, don't neglect to give me your answer.
>
> Sincerely yours with kind wishes,
>
> Freud [1]

The American mother said that she was grateful for the letter, sent a copy eventually to the sex researcher Alfred Kinsey, and told him that Freud was a "great and good" man. Presumably she found the letter helpful, maybe also comforting, even though it had probed her fearfulness and prejudice. Jones is probably right to describe the letter, in his biography, as a remarkable "kindness."[2] After all Freud had no previous acquaintance with the woman. Yet he took the time to write to her when he was himself deathly ill.

But the letter was more than just a "kindness." It was also the considered expression of a viewpoint that Freud had long deeply felt and tenaciously held. Everything about homosexuality that he says in the letter had been an article of conviction with him for more than 30 years. Summarized: that homosexuality is no advantage; that it is also no illness; that it should neither be prosecuted as a crime nor regarded as a disgrace; that no homosexual need be treated psychoanalytically unless he

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also, and quite incidentally, happened to be neurotic. Freud had expressed himself on the subject before, often, and on occasion very publicly.

As early as 1903 he had given an interview to the Vienna newspaper *Die Zeit*, which was doing a feature story on a local scandal: a prominent Vienna professional man was on trial, charged with homosexual practices. A reporter had come to get Freud's reaction, and Freud had said:

> . . . I advocate the standpoint that the homosexual does not belong before the tribunal of a court of law. I am even of the firm conviction that homosexuals must not be treated as sick people, for a perverse orientation is far from being a sickness. Wouldn't that oblige us to characterize as *sick* many great thinkers and scholars whom we admire precisely because of their mental health?

He had then repeated himself, apparently for the sake of emphasis: *"Homosexual persons are not sick, but they also do not belong in a court of law!"* He had added finally, and by way of qualification, that if, however, a homosexual molested a child below "the age of consent," then he should of course be charged in the courts, just as a heterosexual should be charged under analogous circumstances.[3]

In 1930 Freud again spoke in the Vienna public press on the subject of homosexuality. This time he appeared as a cosignatory to a statement addressed to a joint Austro-German legal commission, which was considering the revision of the penal code. Among the other signatories were Arthur Schnitzler, Franz Werfel, and Moritz Schlick. The statement noted that the commission was reported as deadlocked over a proposal to repeal the laws penalizing homosexual relations between "consenting adult males." But the deadlock should be broken. "Humanity, justice, and reason" all required the repeal, and it should be agreed to immediately. "Homosexuality," the statement continued, had "been present throughout history and among all peoples." The laws that penalized it represented an "extreme violation of human rights." For they denied homosexuals "their very sexuality." They also gave a wide opening to "blackmail" and indirectly drove some homosexuals to "suicide." There was yet another bad consequence of these laws. By stigmatizing homosexuality as "criminal," they often forced homosexuals into "antisocial" postures and attitudes. The statement concluded with the "demand" that homosexuals be allowed the same "rights" as everyone else.[4]

These were Freud's public interventions; privately he took a similar line. For instance, he held that there was no good reason why homosexuals should necessarily be refused permission to become psychoanalysts. Freud's position turned out to be objectionable to most of his associates. The issue surfaced in 1920. The Dutch Psychoanalytic Association had an application for membership from a doctor known to be "manifestly homosexual." Uncertain how to respond, they turned for advice to a member of Freud's inner circle, Ernest Jones, the same who later wrote the standard biography. Jones kept Freud informed by letter. "I advised against it," he said, " and now I hear . . . that the man has been detected and committed to prison." He then asked whether or not Freud thought that always to refuse homosexual applicants would be "a safe general maxim to act on." Freud consulted with another member of the inner circle, Otto Rank, who was also a close friend; and then Rank and Freud jointly wrote back to Jones and censured his propriety:

> Your query, dear Ernest, concerning prospective membership of homosexuals has been considered by us and we disagree with you. In effect we cannot exclude such persons without other sufficient reasons, as we cannot agree with their legal prosecution. We feel that a decision in such cases should depend upon a thorough examination of the other qualities of the candidate.

Rank and Freud wrote, of course, from Vienna. Jones, who got their letter, was in London. Within about a month news of the exchange had reached the analysts of Berlin, whereupon three of them, Hanns Sachs, Karl Abraham, and Max Eitingon, all alarmed, wrote to Freud in criticism of his position.

The criticism was put tactfully but firmly: "We have not yet decided," they began, "about the question of admitting homosexual analysts to our Society. . . . " This was no doubt meant

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to remind Freud that the decision, at least in Berlin, was constitutionally theirs rather than his. "But," they went on, "we have had some thoughts on this matter." Their "thoughts" were that "homosexuality appears in many forms as part of a neurosis," that in such instances the homosexuality "should be analyzed," that neurotic homosexuals might and often did refuse to let their analysis go deep, and that when they so refused they could hardly turn out to be good analysts themselves. Sachs, Abraham, and Eitingon then concluded: "We agree that we only should accept homosexuals into our membership when they have other qualities in their favor." This conclusion both restated Freud's position and modified it subtly. His letter had stipulated that homosexuality ought to be a neutral factor or a nonfactor in the evaluation of applicants; their letter, on the other hand, suggested that homosexuality might well make for a presumption against an applicant but that he should nevertheless be admitted if he were judged good enough. The wording of both letters is, however, close; and Freud chose to be, or had to be, content with their response.[5]

As a clinician, Freud refused to treat homosexuals, unless he thought them markedly neurotic, too.[6] Otherwise there was nothing to treat. Homosexuality was not in his view an illness, and whenever associates who assumed that it was an illness tried to refer homosexuals to him for treatment, he turned them away, if he knew in advance that they were merely homosexuals. He could not always know in advance, and he must on occasion have had to see, if only for a single session, a patient who was homosexual and relatively unneurotic but forced to consult him by a psychiatrist, a family doctor, a friend, or a relative, like the American mother with whom Freud corresponded in 1935.

It would be interesting to know how he handled such patients; but he has left us no account of his dealings with any of them. For him they were not cases, and so there was no reason to write up a case history. But there is one account of a single session with Freud, written by a patient who may fit into this category. It is hard to be entirely sure; the account is moving as a portrait of the psychoanalyst but disappointingly sparse about the patient himself, whose name was Bruno Goetz. At the time Goetz consulted Freud, he was a student at the University of Vienna, an aspiring poet, poor, afflicted with eye trouble and bad headaches, and apparently sexually unconventional, too. One of his professors, who was worried about Goetz, had arranged for the consultation and sent Freud some of the man's poems as well. Goetz did not want to go, but the professor's authority was sufficient to make him, and he went.

Once Goetz got to Freud's office, he began to feel better immediately. The headaches disappeared, and he talked eagerly about his life and loves. He talked about masturbating, about once loving a woman older than himself, about his fascination with the sea, about his attraction to sailors, whom he wanted "to kiss," and about his not marrying. Freud said (as Goetz reports), " 'And the matter with the sailors has never upset you?' " Goetz answered, " 'Never . . . I was very much in love. And when you're in love, everything is fine. Right?' " Freud replied, " 'For you certainly . . .' and laughed." Toward the end of the consultation, Freud asked Goetz when he had last eaten a steak. Goetz said four weeks before. Freud then handed him a sealed envelope, told him it was a " 'prescription,' " and then turned "shy" as he concluded the session by saying: " 'Please accept this envelope and allow me to play your father this time. A small fee for the joy you have brought me with your poems and the story of your youth.' " When Goetz left and opened the envelope, he found that it contained money, 200 kronen, more than enough to buy a big steak dinner.[7]

Freud was perfectly consistent on the subject of homosexuality. What he told the American mother in his letter of 1935, that it was neither advantage, crime, illness, nor disgrace, he had long believed and long acted on. His viewpoint was not wholeheartedly shared by most of his fellow analysts, though no analyst so far as I know directly and avowedly rejected it during Freud's lifetime. But his colleagues did show some hesitation about it, some edginess. The Dutch wondered whether or not a

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homosexual should be admitted to practice analysis; Jones, in England, thought not; the Berliners said maybe yes, maybe no, but were probably inclined to say no; and some analysts referred relatively unneurotic homosexuals to Freud for treatment, though he of course thought there was no need. Jung too may have felt rather differently from Freud on the subject of homosexuality. His viewpoint, during the years when he was still associated with psychoanalysis, is hard to reconstruct fully; but there is a suggestive comment in one of his letters.

Jung and Freud were corresponding about where a certain essay of Freud's was to be published. The *Zeitschrift für Sexualwissenschaft*, a journal edited by a homosexual, had been mentioned, and Jung advised against using it. "If the '175ers' are in charge, that will hardly be a guarantee of its scientific attitude," Jung wrote. In the German law code the number of the clause in which the penalities for homosexual practice were specified was 175.[8] The term "175ers" meant homosexuals and was derogatory. Jung's comment, in substance, was also, of course, prejudicious. Freud replied by saying that he had not intended the essay for the *Zeitschrift*, which might become the voice of the homosexual emancipation movement in Germany, and therefore might be too political. He said that he had intended the essay for the *Jahrbuch für Sexuelle Zwischenstufen*—another journal edited by the same homosexual who edited the *Zeitschrift*. Jung made no further comment.[9]

So far as I can tell, only three analysts can be tentatively identified as sharing perhaps without reservation in Freud's viewpoint on homosexuality. They are Rank, who cosigned the letter to Jones calling for the admission of qualified homosexuals to the practice of psychoanalysis, Isidor Sadger, whose position can be deduced from some essays he published,[10] and Victor Tausk. One of Tausk's colleagues reported him as saying this in about 1914 on the treatment of a particular neurotic homosexual: "... his therapeutic goal for the patient was to rid him of feelings of guilt about his homosexuality so that he could be free to satisfy his homosexual needs."[11] But if Rank, Sadger, and Tausk stood in this matter firmly with Freud, they were the exceptions. Most analysts had room for other thoughts.

It was in America, however, that Freud's viewpoint on homosexuality was least accepted or maybe most resisted. Jung may in a careless moment have let slip a prejudicious slur; Jones may have wanted to draw the line at having homosexual colleagues; the Dutch and Germans may also have felt some of his reserve; but from the very beginnings of the transplanting of psychoanalysis onto these shores, American analysts have tended to view homosexuality with disapproval and have actually wanted to get rid of it altogether. As early as 1916, when Freud was still very active, Smith Ely Jeliffe, a prominent New York analyst and a founder of the *Psychoanalytic Review*, declared that "individual training" and "education" should control the "homogenic" tendency and "direct it" to a "normal, well-adjusted sexual life" so that there need be no homosexuality.[12]

Jeliffe's declaration is perhaps distinctively American; it reflects the outlook that historians usually call moralistic and that has always dominated psychoanalytic thinking in this country. It is an outlook that Freud knew, despised, and opposed, but never succeeded in overcoming or even mitigating. Why he never succeeded may require an explanation. He was after all a domineering leader, with little patience for any deviationism; and presumably he could have cut off the offending American analysts, just as he eventually cut off such Europeans as Adler and Jung. Perhaps he was afraid that too much severity on the American front would put the whole future of psychoanalysis at risk. It was clear, certainly by the 1930s, that the movement was going to grow fastest in America. He may also have held back partly out of a kind of indifference. What Americans said and thought was less important to him than what his fellow Europeans said and thought. Then, too, he believed that the American analysts' outlook was not accidental but necessary, derived directly from what he took to be the root conditions of American life. If that were true, what good could come of cutting off particular analysts?

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Still he argued with them, teased, parried. His most frequent butt was James Jackson Putnam of Harvard, the American analyst whom he liked most or maybe disliked least. Their correspondence, stretching over a period of about seven years, was on Freud's part one long effort to get Putnam to relinquish his moralism (specific allusions to homosexuality, or indeed any sexuality, hardly came up, so elevated were Putnam's ideas, so obliging was Freud as a correspondent); on Putnam's part it was one long refusal.

Putnam met Freud in 1909 and had on that occasion apparently been firmly told that he should not try to hold up before his analytic patients some ethical goal of his own. "It still appears to me," he wrote later that year, "that . . . the psychoanalytic method needs to be supplemented by methods which seek to hold up before the patient some goal toward which he may strive." Putnam went on to note that he was currently treating a "lady" who was "a great sufferer from morbid self-consciousness and blushing," that he was making "good headway" in tracing out the origins of her "symptoms," but that he had found himself confronted by the "difficulty" that she had "lost all interest in life and living." Should he not try, in a hortatory way, to provide her with such an interest? Freud replied that no analyst could "compensate" a patient for giving up an "illness." But that was not the analyst's fault.

> What would you have us do when a woman complains about her thwarted life, when, with youth gone, she notices that she has been deprived of the joy of loving for merely conventional reasons? She is quite right, and we stand helpless before her, for we cannot make her young again. But the recognition of our therapeutic limitations reinforces our determination to change other social factors so that men and women shall no longer be forced into hopeless situations.

This was Freud at his most militantly political; American moralism always brought it out in him. But the militancy made no apparent impact on Putnam, who soon wrote back that patients need "more than to simply learn to know themselves," they need also to know the "reasons why they should adopt higher views of their obligations." He then wrote back yet again, "As I study patients and try to relieve them of their symptoms, I find that I must also try to improve their moral characters and temperaments." Soon after, he told Freud one of his childhood fantasies—it was of a happy family life—and asked for an interpretation. This request gave Freud an opening that he gleefully took:

> On the whole I see that you are suffering from a too early and too strongly repressed sadism expressed in over-goodness and self-torture. Behind the fantasy of a happy family life, you would discover the normal repressed fantasies of rich sexual fulfillment.

Later Freud responded again on a note less personal but still very naughty, gibing at the Christian rhetoric that lay just below the surface of Putnam's letters:

> You make psychoanalysis seem so much nobler and more beautiful: in her Sunday clothes I scarcely recognize the servant who performs my household tasks.

Next, undaunted, Putnam wrote to say that he wanted to compose something rather big on the subject of "sublimation," with special reference "to the work of Dante and Emerson."

Freud replied that he looked forward to it "with great interest." Putnam then wrote more about his personal commitment to sublimation and to the task of helping his patients achieve it satisfactorily. Freud replied this time with bitterness rather than irony: "As soon," he wrote, as analysts take on "the task of leading the patient toward sublimation, they hasten away from the arduous tasks of psychoanalysis so that they can take up the much more comfortable . . . duties of the teacher and paragon of virtue." Finally Freud turned very direct. He dropped all obliquity, all his tones except candor, and in one of the last few letters he wrote to Putnam, shortly before Putnam's death separated them forever, attacked his moralism straight on:

> Sexual morality as society—and at its most extreme, American society—defines it, seems very despicable to me. I stand for a much freer sexual life.

That too made no apparent impact on Putnam,

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and in his next letter he ignored altogether Freud's remark about America.[13]

If Freud thought that American sexual morality was despicable, he also thought he knew how it had come to be that way. He visited America only once, in the fall of 1909, when he came here to deliver five introductory lectures on psychoanalysis at Clark University to an audience that, incidentally, included both William James and Emma Goldman. During his stay he got to see New York, New Haven, Boston, Worcester, and Niagara Falls, and he also spent some time in the Adirondacks. Still the trip was brief, the itinerary limited, and his conclusions were exceptionally positive and firm. No doubt he had made up his mind at least tentatively before the trip had begun, largely on the basis of his reading and his personal contacts with individual Americans, partly probably on the basis of the prejudice against America that is always common in European intellectual circles.

When asked once he returned to Vienna what exactly he thought was wrong here, he would usually treat the question as unserious and respond lightly. He hated the food. It gave him indigestion. Or he might say he hated the accent. Only the British knew how to speak English right. But sometimes he treated the question as serious and responded accordingly; and there is no difficulty now in making out his actual view. First of all he thought that Americans were extraordinarily overrepressed. He found them sexually vapid, flavorless. As his Viennese colleague Paul Federn tactlessly reported years later when in 1947 he spoke in New York at the dedication of a Freud bust in the headquarters of the New York Psychoanalytic Society, Freud had always held that in America there was not "enough libido actually to be found and felt by him."[14] Why were the Americans such nonentities sexually? Because they sublimated their sexual energy so completely. As for their despicable moralism, that was the rationale for the sublimation. And was the goal of American sublimation the production of art, science, law, architecture, music, literature? No: the goal was cash, acquisition, accumulation. All the energy that was not loosed sexually was going toward making money and toward very little else. Jones, in his biography, put the point delicately: Freud had an "unfavorable impression" of America. "I imagine," Jones said, "that the aversion had something to do with a feeling that commercial success dominated the scale of values in the United States. . . ."[15]

Freud himself put the point still more delicately, but nonetheless very definitely, while actually speaking to his one American audience at Clark. To be sure, his primary rhetorical strategy in those five lectures was to flatter his hearers in the hopes of securing their favorable interest in what he had to say concerning psychoanalysis. He told them that theirs was a "New World"; he added that in the old, benighted European world there was unreasoning prejudice against psychoanalysis; and he intimated that in the New World no such prejudice was likely. He told them that he had originally planned to speak chiefly about "dream interpretation" but upon consideration had rejected the plan. It seemed to him, he said, somehow wrong to focus on dreams in a country so admirably "devoted to practical aims." He told them that "hysteria" might perhaps be best understood as analogous to a kind of overinvolvement in history.

Imagine, Freud said, a "Londoner" unable to live joyfully in the present because he could not escape from the clutch of the past and so spent all his time mourning at spots like "Charing Cross" or "the Monument," consecrated to ancient losses. In developing this analogy, Freud was hinting broadly and quite mendaciously that since Americans had much less history than, say, Londoners, they were much better off. All this was flattery, and thickly applied, too. But in the midst of the flattery, Freud also managed to say what he thought. His moment came when he explained how jokes were to be interpreted psychoanalytically. First he gave an example of a joke:

> Two not particularly scrupulous businessmen had succeeded, by dint of a series of highly risky enterprises, in amassing a large fortune, and they were now making efforts to push their way into good society. One method, which struck them as a likely one, was to have their portraits painted by the most celebrated and highly paid artists in

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> the city. . . . The precious canvasses were shown for the first time at a large evening party, and the two hosts led the most influential connoisseur . . . up to the wall on which the portraits were hanging side by side. He studied the works for a long time, and then, shaking his head, as though there was something he had missed, pointed to the gap between the pictures and asked quietly: "But where's the Savior?"

The audience laughed. Freud went on:

> Clearly what the connoisseur meant to say was: "You are a couple of rogues, like the two thieves between whom the Savior was crucified." But he did not say this. Instead he made a remark which seems at first sight strangely inappropriate . . . , but which we recognize later as an *allusion* to the insult that he had in mind. . . .

Having explained how to interpret the joke, Freud proceeded to ask: "Why" did the connoisseur "not tell the rogues straight out what he wanted to say?" Why did he tell them only indirectly via the joke? He then answered his own question. The connoisseur had "excellent counter-motives working against his desire to say it to their faces. There are risks attendant upon insulting people who are one's hosts."[16]

It takes but a moment's reflection to realize that at Clark, Freud himself was the honored guest, the Americans were his hosts, and that he was insulting them, though indirectly, with the joke he told. They were the unscrupulous businessmen; they were the thieves. From this opinion of them, or rather of us, as thieves—and as consequently also sexless and despicably moralistic—Freud never budged.

What happened to homosexuals who found themselves in treatment with American psychoanalysts of the era of Putnam and Jeliffe? Putnam, who thought he should inspire his patients with his own ethical vision? Jeliffe, who thought that training and education should control homosexual feeling and reshape it into "normal, well-adjusted" sexuality? First of all, such patients could feel physically safe; they ran no risk, so long as they were in the hands of the analysts, of getting castrated. This disaster sometimes overtook homosexuals in nonanalytic treatment. Analysts only talked. Just what the talk was we of course cannot now know exactly and fully. But we can know partially, fragmentarily, a small sample of it, a sample that concerns an American homosexual named C. M. Otis, who in 1911 found himself in successive consultations with two different Boston analysts, Isador Coriat and Louville Emerson.

Emerson took notes that are still extant. From them we learn that Otis described himself as having never had intercourse with a woman, as having more than occasionally had sexual contact with boys, as having long felt both persecuted and sure that he could never become heterosexual. Emerson saw Otis for six therapy sessions. During the sixth Emerson ended their connection. In his notes he recorded the reason for his making so decisive and abrupt an ending: The patient "shows no adequate emotional reaction to my suggestions." He did not specify what the suggestions were.[17] Some eight years later Emerson published in the *Psychoanalytic Review* a brief and courteous critique of Freud. The point of the critique was that Freud was wrong to try to exclude "ethics" from psychoanalysis. All analysts must try to tell which social relations were, and which were not, "righteous."[18] Whatever were the suggestions that Emerson made and Otis rejected, we can surely conclude that Otis's experience with his analyst was significantly different from Goetz's with his.

To return to Freud's letter to the American mother. His motive in writing it was by no means just "kindness," nor was it just a determination to restate a position he had long held. He wanted also to hit back at us Americans, at our moralism and our misuse of psychoanalysis. He knew perfectly well that the letter would be noticed. He intended it to be noticed. It was a deliberate provocation, and perhaps the heart of it was the passage where he ended: "If you make up your mind he should have analysis with me—I don't expect you will—he has to come over to Vienna."[19]

Freud had no need of more patients, and the woman was a stranger. His object was to tell her, and everybody else, too, that her son could not be properly treated in America.

It may be surprising, in the light of what this paper has said so far, to find that Freud was very much at odds with the homosexual eman-

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cipation movement of his own day. But in fact he was. On one important matter he disagreed adamantly with the line taken by the movement, and he expressed the disagreement in his psychological writings on three separate occasions.

The movement was then based mostly in Germany, where it had originated during the latter part of the 19th century. Its progenitor had been Karl Heinrich Ulrichs (1825–95), a Hanoverian lawyer, who in a series of books had propounded the view that homosexuals constituted "a third sex," possessed of a "female soul" in a "male body." Ulrichs's spiritual successor and the movement's first great leader had been Magnus Hirschfeld (1868–1935), a Jewish doctor in Berlin, who as publicist, organizer, lobbyist, and clinical investigator had worked long and tirelessly for the repeal of the laws penalizing homosexuality and for public recognition of its widespread incidence. Like Ulrichs, Hirschfeld had also thought of homosexuals as a biologically and psychically distinct group. He had called them "sexual intermediates."[20]

As we have seen, Freud willingly endorsed the movement's law reform objectives. What he rejected was the theory that lay behind them, the theory of the "third sex," of "sexual intermediates." In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905), he criticized Ulrichs directly, referring to him by name as "a spokesman of the male inverts," and mentioning his notion of "a feminine brain in a masculine body" in order to brush it aside.[21] In *Leonardo da Vinci* (1910), he again took note of the movement's line:

> Homosexual men, who have in our times taken vigorous action against the restrictions imposed by law on their sexual activity, are fond of representing themselves, through their theoretical spokesmen, as being from the outset a distinct sexual species, as an intermediate sexual stage, as a "third sex."

He added that this representation should be viewed with "some reserve." For it took no account of the findings of psychoanalysis. Later, in the 1919 edition, he inserted in a footnote a firmer critical comment: ". . . those who speak for homosexuals in the field of science have been incapable of learning anything from the established findings of psychoanalysis."[22] Yet again in *Introductory Lectures* (1917), he also had made much the same point. He said that homosexuals "through the mouth of their scientific spokesmen" were endeavoring to "represent themselves as a special variety of the human species—a 'third sex'. . . ." This representation was, however, mistaken; psychoanalysis proved it wrong.[23]

But how did psychoanalysis prove it wrong? Freud thought that analysis showed that all people were "capable of making a homosexual object choice" and that all had "in fact made one in their unconscious." He thought that analysis also showed that

> . . . libidinal attachments to persons of the same sex play no less a part in normal mental life, and a greater part as a motive force for illness, than do similar attachments to the opposite sex.[24]

With these findings in mind, he could hardly accept that homosexuals were "a distinct sexual species" or "a special variety of the human species." On the contrary, Freud held that all people were psychologically like the ones called homosexuals. No doubt, homosexual men would on the whole tend to have sex with men, while nonhomosexual men would on the whole tend to have sex with women. This difference, though of "practical significance," was of small "theoretical" significance.[25] What *was* theoretically significant, what must never be forgotten or denied or elided, was that everybody's sexuality was homosexual in large part.

Homosexuals, Freud insisted, were not "exceptions," and psychoanalysis was "decidedly opposed to any attempt" to separate them off "from the rest of mankind as a group of a special character."[26] To do so would be to reject, in fact to repress, the psychoanalytic theory of sex.

So Freud argued, but the movement was not much interested by his argument. Notions like the "third sex" or, to glance ahead for a moment to modern-day America, "gay people," can play an important role in enabling homosexual assertiveness. It is bracing to think of oneself as part of a group. One feels less odd, maybe less vulnerable, maybe even prouder.

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Besides, groups can organize to advance their members' common interests. In a parliamentary culture, as the Germany of Freud's day in some measure was, or as modern-day America is, group-organizational strength can often translate directly into political influence. Freud understood all this, and he cannot have been surprised when the homosexual emancipation movement ignored him. But he took his stand against their line anyway, just as he had also taken his stand against American moralism, and for the same reason: both line and moralism were, as he saw the matter, in effect repressions.

Freud died in 1939, four years after he had written his letter to the American mother. Almost as soon as he was cremated, a host of revisionist essays started rolling off the psychoanalytic presses, especially in America. One of the subjects most eagerly canvassed was homosexuality. We may here review briefly and in a very foreshortened way what the American analysts said about it once they could be sure that Freud was gone.

Sandor Rado (1890–1972) of the Columbia Psychoanalytic Clinic in New York was the first to declare himself. In a series of pieces published in the 1940s, he argued that male-female pairing was healthy, that it was moreover the "standard pattern," that homosexuality was an illness based on a fear of women, and that it could often be cured in psychoanalysis.[27]

Following Rado's lead, Irving Bieber (b. 1908) conducted a big study in the 1950s and published his results in 1962. His purpose was not, he said, to establish that homosexuality was an illness. All "psychoanalytic theories," he went on, effectually ignoring Freud, "*assume* that homosexuality is psychopathologic." His purpose was rather to come to understand the etiology of the illness; and he argued that it derived primarily from a certain sort of bad family situation: a domineering mother, a cold father. He too was relatively optimistic about achieving cures.

Charles Socarides (b. 1922) went farthest perhaps of any of the American analysts. He argued, in a series of pieces published mostly in the 1960s, that homosexuality was in fact a severe illness, accompanied often by such psychotic manifestations as schizophrenia or manic-depressive mood swings. While heterosexual pairings could make for "cooperation, solace, stimulation, enrichment, healthy challenge and fulfillment," homosexual pairings could bring only "destruction, mutual defeat, exploitation of the partner and the self, oral-sadistic incorporation, aggressive onslaughts, attempts to alleviate anxiety, and a pseudo-solution to the aggressive and libidinal urges which dominate and torment the individual." Socarides also said that cures were possible.[28]

Influenced perhaps especially by Rado, the American Psychiatric Association in 1952 formally classified homosexuality as an illness. When the gay liberation movement grew strong in America in the 1960s, this classification, still very much on the books,[29] became a major issue for its members and they devoted much effort to getting it rescinded. Through a mix of agitation and argument, they eventually succeeded. In 1973 the Association removed homosexuality from its official list of illnesses.[30] In announcing the declassification, the president of the Association said that he hoped the result would be a "more accommodative climate of opinion for the homosexual minority in our country. . . ."[31] Here the word to note is minority. What the president assumed was that homosexuals were indeed a minority, a group of a special character. He assumed as much both because the gay liberation movement was predictably saying so and because their psychoanalytic allies were loudly agreeing.

Psychoanalytic allies? Yes: the movement had such allies, of whom the two most influential were Judd Marmor (b. 1910) and Robert Stoller (b. 1924). During the '60s and '70s, both these analysts clashed repeatedly with the Bieber–Socarides set. Both, denying that homosexuality was an illness, described it instead as the sexual orientation of a minority. In so describing it they of course rejected the view that Freud had thought theoretically crucial—the view that *everybody's* sexuality was in large part homosexual. Marmor put his rejection tactfully: Freud had held that homosexuality was a "universal trend." That view was not "illogical," but it was "non-operational" and should be discarded.[32] Stoller said much the

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same: By sticking to Freud's view we could never have clear grounds for saying of anybody that he was not homosexual. That would be troublesome. We would probably be well advised to revert to a "less complicated definition of homosexuality" and think of it as just the preserve of homosexuals, as "that state in which sexual practices are performed by preference, in conscious fantasy or in reality, with a person of the same sex."[33] So Marmor and Stoller both saw homosexuality as belonging to homosexuals alone, who were therefore different from everybody else, and thus a minority. But homosexuals were not necessarily ill any more than was any other minority—blacks, Hispanics, Jews—and they were entitled to be free of the stigma that official psychiatry had placed on them so unfairly. Of course, the corollary of the humane ascription of minority status was this: that people outside the minority need no longer think of themselves as in some important way homosexual, too.

At the Association meetings that had led up to the eventual decision to rescind the classification of homosexuality as an illness, all of the major protagonists had been analysts. On the one side, Bieber and Socarides; on the other, Marmor and Stoller. A strange spectacle: two sets of moralistic analysts, each opposing the other, each claiming to stand in the tradition of Freud, and each espousing a position that Freud had himself rejected as wrong and repressive. In America, Freudianism continues as it began.

Notes

[1] "A Letter from Freud," *American Journal of Psychiatry*, April 1951, p. 786. A photostat of the holograph letter is reproduced here.

[2] Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, 3 vols. (New York: Basic Books, 1953–57), 3:195.

[3] Quoted by Herb Spiers and Michael Lynch, "The Gay Rights Freud," *Body Politic*, May 1977, p. 9.

[4] Quoted by Spiers and Lynch, p. 9.

[5] Quoted by Spiers and Lynch, p. 9. This set of letters is part of a group known as the "Rundbriefe," preserved in the Otto Rank Collection and deposited at the Columbia University Library. I quote from translations prepared, and kindly made available to me, by Professor James Steakley (Rank Collection IIa/238, IIa/243, and IIa/248). Probably the most crucial unpublished source for the history of psychoanalytic thought, the "Rundbriefe" are still very little known. But see Patrick Mahony, *Freud as a Writer* (New York: International Universities Press, 1982), pp. 97–98; M. Grotjahn, "Notes on Reading the 'Rundbriefe,' " *Journal of the Otto Rank Association* 8 (1973–74), pp. 35–38; and E. Salomon, "Reactions to Reading the 'Rundbriefe,' " *Journal of the Otto Rank Association* 8 (1973–74), pp. 89–91.

[6] See, for instance, Freud's letter of April 13, 1919 to Oscar Pfister, in *The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Oscar Pfister*, H. Meng and E. Freud, eds. (New York: Basic Books, 1963), p. 68.

[7] An excerpt from Goetz's memoir in English translation is printed in *Freud as We Knew Him*, H. Ruitenbeek, ed. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973), pp. 264ff. For the full text in the original German, see Bruno Goetz, "Erinnerungen an Sigmund Freud," *Neue Schweizer Rundschau*, May 1952, pp. 3ff. This translation, slightly modified by me, is Dr. Ruitenbeek's.

[8] See Jürgen Baumann, *Paragraph 175: Über die Möglichkeit, die einfache, nicht jugendgefährdende und nicht öffentliche Homosexualität unter Erwachsenen straffrei zu lassen* (Berlin/Neuwied: Luchterhand, 1968).

[9] *The Freud–Jung Letters: The Correspondence of Sigmund Freud and C. G. Jung*, W. McGuire, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 97, 125, 126. But about three years later in their correspondence, Jung let slip another slur. He was writing about a man named Römer, who was homosexual, and said: "He is, like all homosexuals, no delicacy." See *Freud–Jung*, p. 423.

[10] See, for instance, Isidor Sadger, "Ist die Konträre Sexualempfindung heilbar?" *Zeitschrift für Sexualwissenschaft* 1 (1908), pp. 712ff. I thank Professor Steakley for bringing this essay to my attention.

[11] The colleague was the Italian analyst Edoardo Weiss. See Edoardo Weiss, *Sigmund Freud as Consultant* (New York: Intercontinental Medical Book Corp., 1970), p. 9. On Tausk and his relation to Freud, see Paul Roazen, *Brother Animal* (New York: Knopf, 1969); K. R. Eissler, *Talent and Genius* (New York: Grove, 1971); and Neil Hertz, "Freud and the Sandman," *Textual Strategies*, J. Harari, ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), pp. 296–321.

[12] Quoted by Nathan Hale, *Freud and the Americans: The Beginning of Psychoanalysis in the United States, 1876–1971* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 339.

[13] *James Jackson Putnam and Psychoanalysis*, N. Hale, ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University

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Press, 1971), pp. 87, 90, 91, 95, 117, 130, 137, 152, 153, 161, 168, 171, 189.

[14] Ruitenbeek, p. 220.

[15] Ernest Jones, *Free Associations: Memoirs of a Psychoanalyst* (London: Hogarth, 1959), p. 190.

[16] *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, J. Strachey et al., trs. and eds., 24 vols. (London: Hogarth, 1966–74), vol. 11, pp. 9, 39, 33, 16, 17, 30, 31. I thank my student Andrew Tully, who made a comment in classroom discussion that helped me to focus my ideas about the *Five Lectures*.

[17] Martin Duberman, "The Therapy of C. M. Otis: 1911," *Christopher Street*, November, 1977, p. 33ff.

[18] Hale, *Freud and the Americans*, p. 346.

[19] See above, Note 1.

[20] I follow John Lauritsen and David Thorstad, *The Early Homosexual Rights Movement, 1864–1935* (New York: Times Change, 1974); James Steakley, *The Homosexual Emancipation Movement in Germany* (New York: Arno, 1975); and Timothy Roe Lyman, "Homosexual Movements in Perspective: The Emergence of Homosexual Identity in Germany, 1900–1933" (A. B. Honors Thesis, Harvard College, 1980). I thank Timothy Lyman for his kindness in permitting me to read his excellent thesis.

[21] *Standard Edition*, 7:142.

[22] *Standard Edition*, 11:98, 99.

[23] *Standard Edition*, 16:304, 307, 308.

[24] *Standard Edition*, 12:145.

[25] *Standard Edition*, 16:308.

[26] *Standard Edition*, 16:307; 7:145.

[27] Quoted by Ronald Bayer, *Homosexuality and American Psychiatry: The Politics of Diagnosis* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), pp. 28, 29. In my account of Rado, Bieber, and Socarides, I generally and gratefully follow Bayer. So perhaps I should note that I cannot follow his treatment of Freud. There Bayer goes wrong. He tends to accept that Freud believed what American analysts have said he believed.

[28] Bayer, pp. 30, 31, 34, 35, 36, 37.

[29] This classification was also reflected in the attitudes of a substantial number of American health-care professionals. As late as 1971, just two years before the classification was rescinded, a study of a random sample of 163 such professionals in the San Francisco area (63 social workers, 50 psychiatrists, and 50 clinical psychologists) showed that only 64% overall were prepared to say that homosexuality wasn't an illness. See Joel Fort, Claude M. Steiner, and Florence Conrad, "Attitudes of Mental Health Professionals toward Homosexuality and Its Treatment," *Psychological Reports* 29 (1971), p. 349. One way of gauging the enduring force of American moralism may be to compare these results with those of a rather similar study done the same year in England. A random sample of 300 health-care professionals (150 general practitioners, 150 psychiatrists) showed that 94.3% overall were prepared to say that homosexuality wasn't an illness. See Philip A. Morris, "Doctors' Attitudes to Homosexuality," *British Journal of Psychiatry* 72 (1973), p. 436.

[30] Bayer, p. 136.

[31] Quoted by Bayer, p. 138.

[32] *Sexual Inversion*, ed. J. Marmor (New York: Basic Books, 1965), pp. 2, 3, 4.

[33] Robert Stoller, *Sex and Gender* (New York: Science House, 1968), pp. 142, 143, 144. □

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Martin Kilson

Paradoxes of Blackness

Notes on the Crisis of Black Intellectuals

The life of Afro-American intellectuals is governed by a web of contradictions. Simply put, there is this central contradiction: while black intellectuals work within the aesthetic limits of a pariah-like ethnicity, this ethnicity's cultural forms are used and exploited—both intellectually and commercially—by the dominant white culture.

The black intellectual's quest for self-identity might have been easier, one wryly reflects, had the cultural and aesthetic boundaries between black and white Americans been rigidly sustained, like those in South Africa. But the precarious amalgam of cultural identities and feelings in American society permits no such painful clarity.

The paradox of blackness in American society, then, is plain enough. In white hands, blackness can be converted into sizable commercial (and even intellectual) value. The white's attitude toward blackness stops short of a cultural rejection of the *présence noire* in American life—a very different cultural dynamic from fascist Germany's total rejection of the *présence juive*. This reflects the awesome power of a market-value pragmatism: the white money-making legitimation of blackness (the blues, jazz, and gospel) is quite natural. And despite the American racist heritage, some facets of white American identity have been nurtured by the market-induced pop-culture artifacts of blackness—minstrel shows and songs of the early 20th century; the jazz of the big band era; the rock, disco, country, and punk variants of jazz and blues (rhythm and blues) since the 1960s.

Thus the *présence noire*, while still searching for full political parity, is culturally ubiquitous in American life. A veritable "Afroization" has occurred. It plays an important role in the socialization of white youth and is strong among young adults too. It extends even to such elements of sacred culture as white Pentecostalism, of both the Protestant and the Catholic charismatic varieties, which borrow numerous expressive rites from Afro-American religious observance. The ambiguous status of blackness—designating an ethnic group that is both stigmatized and culturally pervasive—both excites and offends Afro-Americans, especially the intelligentsia. This is why it is basic to the crisis of the black intellectual.

Response to Crisis: The Black Aesthetic

THESE ANXIETIES have confronted every generation of black intellectuals with a gnawing dilemma: how to invent a response to white competition for the cultural and market values of blackness, especially since appropriating them is race-bound (politicized) in the whites' favor. As Langston Hughes wrote in a 1920s poem, *Note on Commercial Theatre:*

> You've taken my blues and gone—
> You sing 'em on Broadway
> And you sing 'em in Hollywood Bowl
> And you mixed 'em up with symphonies
> And you fixed 'em
> So they don't sound like me.
> Yep, you done taken my blues and gone.

Though some black intellectuals since World War I have sought aesthetic strategies for limiting the boundaries of blackness in such a way that blacks would control its market value, there also persists a strategy of acculturation that favors blacks shaping and sharing in white Americans' appropriation of black-

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ness. The dialectics of this dual response are always intricate, as Harold Cruse shows in his book *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* (New York: Morrow, 1967). For example, black intellectuals who supported the Garvey movement's preference for complete fission in black/white cultural relations during the 1920s found themselves promoting the Communist party's preference for partial fusion in the 1930s. The fusion viewpoint was also prominent in the 1950s and '60s, as exemplified by LeRoi Jones's role in the beat movement and by modern jazz innovators (such as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Bud Powell, and Miles Davis).

More recently, however, a preference for fission in black/white cultural relations has gained prominence, especially in the form of the black-aesthetic movement of the late 1960s and '70s. This movement has the allegiance of more black intellectuals than any other ethnocentrist development among Afro-Americans in this century, including the Garvey movement of the 1920s whose hope for control of blackness involved an exodus to Africa. The black-aesthetic movement shares the Garveyites' antipathy to the pluralist hope for parity in black/white cultural relations—a preference popular in the liberal mainstream of American intellectuals. Instead, the black-aesthetic movement favors an ethnocentric hegemony over blacks' cultural and expressive forms, as well as a radical politics (a sort of romantic Marxism).

To begin with, the black-aesthetic theorists posit a black/white aesthetic standoff. Morally, the black aesthetic is presented as a way of maximizing humanity's peaceful and humanistic character, though black ethnocentrist theorists do not profess pacifism. The white aesthetic is seen as obsessed with power, reflecting a proclivity to dominate and destroy. Thus, if the white aesthetic dehumanizes, the black aesthetic generates the humanization of power and authority.

Furthermore, black ethnocentrist intellectuals believe that the dehumanizing tilt of the white aesthetic dictates its ethical and critical canons, which are formalistic in design, aesthetically arid, and prone to celebrate artistic creation as a thing-in-itself. In *The Black Aesthetic*, Addison Gayle, the main black ethnocentrist writer, argues that the white aesthetic tries "to evaluate the work of art in terms of *its* beauty and not in terms of the transformation from ugliness to beauty that the work of art demands from its audience."[1]

The black aesthetic differs fundamentally: "The question for the black [artist] is not how beautiful is a melody, a play, a poem, or a novel, but how much more beautiful has the poem, melody, play, or novel made the life of a single black man?" And when, as is inevitable, this crudely utilitarian aesthetic gets generalized into a strategy for judging society as a whole—that is, gets politicized—the black aesthetic becomes, in Addison Gayle's eyes, "a corrective—a means of helping black people out of the polluted mainstream of Americanism. . . ."

So defined, the black aesthetic is, I think, essentially devoid of the cultural introspection that for centuries has been part of humanity's aesthetic quest. Instead, the black aesthetic is outward-looking, deriving its purpose, élan, and meaning from activism rather than contemplation, *from politics rather than norms.* And for the black ethnocentrists, Addison Gayle writes, black politics gains validity only insofar as it enhances "the de-Americanization of black people [which] lies at the heart of the Black Aesthetic."

What is particularly bad about "Americanism," as the black ethnocentrists see it, is that the power that lends it content is "opposed to humankind, against the dignity of the individual . . .: to be an American is to lose one's humanity." For Addison Gayle the Vietnam War is a metaphor for dehumanization, especially the American variety.

> What else is one to make of My Lai, Vietnam? [Gayle asks]. A black soldier has been charged with joining his white compatriots in the murder of innocent Vietnamese women and children. How far has the Americanization of black men progressed when a southern black man stands beside white men and shoots down, not the enemies of his people (white men), but the niggers of American construction?

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[1] Addison Gayle, *The Black Aesthetic* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1971).

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Flaws in the Black Aesthetic: Ethnocentrism as Ideology

LIKE ALL ETHNOCENTRISTS, the black-aesthetic theorists neglect a most elemental fact about human beings, white and black, Jew, Christian, and Muslim: their shared and seemingly infinite capacity to dehumanize their relations. The problem, then, with black ethnocentrists is a matter of perspective, a matter of place and history. Circumstances of time and place can bring out the beast in us all. Though basing their chauvinistic and mystical notions about the aesthetic uniqueness of blackness (that is, its inaccessibility to nonblacks) on the political economy of the slave trade and slavery, theorists such as Addison Gayle and Stephen Henderson are rather ill-informed about the painfully ironic facts surrounding Afro-Americans' dehumanizing entry into American society as slaves.

The horrible fact is that the Atlantic slave trade was voluntarily and extensively assisted by African societies. The bitter truth is that African ruling and ritual strata—and others not so elevated—nurtured the slave trade for generations. In exchange for their grisly services they received the means for greater power within African societies, especially guns and money, but also such frivolous wares as beads. In short, the claim that blackness sustains a unique power-effacing ethos is dubious.

In their assumption that aesthetics and politics are virtually interchangeable, the black ethnocentrists misconstrue this relationship. In reality, such a crude linkage between aesthetics and politics produces ideology, not that cluster of reflective human concerns we call aesthetics. Need I add that the distinction between ideology and aesthetics is fundamental: *the former rationalizes, the latter civilizes*. Or, as George Dickie has put it, aesthetic awareness is "disinterested attention."[2] Ideology, on the other hand, is contingent—it functions as an excuse, recognized or not, for a hidden agenda.

Thus the imposition of ideology upon creativity—or, put another way, the politicizing of the aesthetic—often leads to a mere travesty of the aesthetic experience. The road back from such a shambles is long and arduous, as witnessed in the aesthetic decay wrought by fascism and communism in Europe, and more recently by kleptocratic capitalism in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

For Afro-American intellectuals, what is minimally necessary for a new creativity is to discard what Michael Harrington has called "mystical militancy . . . that mood of eschatological excitement which renounces common sense." They must, in short, confront the fact that no valid aesthetic can provide a complete solution. Only ideology pretends to do so.

A viable aesthetic will always have an ambivalent relationship to the human condition—sometimes responsible for awesome elevations in action and spirit; sometimes sycophantic and garish in the face of wealth, authority, and power; and sometimes just quiescent and dismissive of human needs. Such ambivalence, indeed, is fundamental—a defining motif—to the classic products of Afro-American culture. Above all, Afro-American culture is a composite culture, an interaction of contrasting aesthetic elements. The best aesthetic achievements of Afro-Americans—the Negro spirituals, early gospel, jazz, and blues—reflect this fully.

Ralph Ellison has rightly chastised black ethnocentrist intellectuals for gravely underestimating the interplay of inclusiveness and resilience within black culture—its adaptive and acculturating capacities—when they present this culture's relation to white society simply as a matter of power and opportunity. For example, Stephen Henderson claims that the aesthetic valuation of a black poem "cannot be resolved without considering the ethnic roots of black poetry, which I insist are ultimately understood only by black people themselves."[3]

Similar chauvinistic boundaries around blackness are proposed by theorists of black theology, an offshoot of the black aesthetic movement that first surfaced in the late 1960s. James Cone, a leading black liberationist theologian, asserts in *The Spirituals and the Blues* that "black music is political because, in its

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[2] George Dickie, *Aesthetics* (New York: Pegasus, 1971), p. 52.

[3] Stephen Henderson, ed., *Understanding the New Black Poetry* (New York: Morrow, 1973), pp. 7–8.

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rejection of white cultural values, it affirms the political 'otherness' of black people. Through song, a new political consciousness is continuously created, one antithetical to the laws of white society."[4]

These and related efforts by black ethnocentrists to cordon off blackness within chauvinistic boundaries are made dubious by the everyday realities of black cultural elasticity—its vivid acculturating propensities within a framework of resilient aesthetic norms. From this vantage point, black music, viewed over time, displays a variety of postures toward white society—repelled by white authoritarian chauvinism (racism) and the denial of human rights, yes; but also attracted to much of its hedonism and gaudiness.

Thus, if black ethnocentrists believe that Afro-American art forms—whether folk or individual—are merely outcomes of black/white power dynamics ("ethnic roots," in Stephen Henderson's phrase), they can never grasp the elliptical meaning and quality of Negro spirituals, the Negro dance, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Nor will they ever intellectually resolve the crisis of blackness, for aesthetic ambiguity is at the heart of blackness—something only the pluralists among black intellectuals fully grasp.

Pluralist Intellectuals—Antidote to Ethnocentrism

THE CRISIS OF BLACKNESS lies deep in the modern American past, criss-crossing every aspect on the identity continuum along which any given black intellectual moves, from being black American to just-plain American. There have always been at least two roads for this journey—the populist or ethnocentrist, and the individualist or deviant. The ethnocentrists, who are always more popular in Afro-American society than the individualists, want hegemony over the market value of blackness by insinuating a hidden agenda (through populist rhetoric) into everybody's agenda. Chauvinistic cultural doctrines (Garveyism, the black aesthetic movement, and so on) come to serve both the power-craving of their spokespeople and as an ideology (rhetoric) for the liberation of all blacks.

Yet while it can be identity-enhancing for some Afro-Americans, *this same black ideology is constrictive for those black intellectuals who seek creative autonomy.* For such black intellectuals, this amounts to double jeopardy, for it comes on top of the constraints of American racism. Faced with the combined impediments of white racism and black ethnocentrism, the black intellectuals who yearn for personal autonomy are forced into a number of deviant paths.

Traditionally, deviants among American intellectuals make a working milieu for themselves by migrating to the periphery of both American society and their ethnic group. Here they find the marginality or autonomy that is always a cutting edge of pluralism for American intellectuals. And, historically, there have been many such arenas for black intellectuals.

In addition to left-wing groups, black intellectuals have gained pluralist networks through eccentric elite circles (for instance, Carl Van Vechten's bohemian clique in the 1920s and '30s) and through homosexual and feminist subcultures. Pluralist ties are also available through interracial or cross-ethnic cohabitation and marriage—sometimes a prominent conveyor belt into pluralism for black intellectuals. Since the 1920s, some of the major black intellectuals have followed this route to pluralism—such intellectuals as Ernest Just (biologist), George Schuyler (novelist), June Jordan (poet), Lorraine Hansberry (playwright), Amiri Baraka/LeRoi Jones (playwright), Julius Lester (critic), St. Clair Drake (sociologist), Jamaica Kincaid (novelist), and Alice Walker (novelist), to mention a few.

There are a variety of routes to a pluralist intellectual identity. Some black intellectuals realize pluralism through "privacy"—they keep apart from formal cosmopolitan networks and seldom express their pluralist posture through political activity. Even while committed to ridding American life of its bigotry, some major Afro-American intellectuals have tried, ever since the 1920s, to take this "privatistic" route. This group includes novelists

[4] James Cone, *The Spirituals and the Blues* (New York: Seabury Press, 1972), p. 6.

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such as Jean Toomer, Ralph Ellison, and Ann Petry.

The more typical route to pluralism for a black intellectual is rather like the one that David Bradley has recently described when writing of Alice Walker:

> Alice Walker was black, a pacifist but a rejector of the organized religions to which that tradition belonged. She was married to a white, indeed, a Jew. She was a rejector of black middle-class education and pretentions, and an acceptor of white upper-class education—but not pretentions. She was . . . a feminist who was also a wife and a mother.[5]

This was Alice Walker from circa 1960 till the early '70s. But in the '70s Walker's marginality changes, away from a white spouse to a black lover, and away from civil rights to feminist activism—a feminism that Bradley says displays "acidity [toward] black male writers [and] black men who are attracted to light-skinned women . . ." (though Walker's black mate, too, is light-skinned). Of course, any intellectual's pluralist posture has inconsistencies, which are often tied up with one's biography, as Bradley's essay on Walker demonstrates. But the striking feature of a pluralist intellectual identity is that it is seldom used simply as a way of gaining an elitist isolation from one's ethnic group, class group, or national membership. It is more often seen as a platform for the egalitarian renovation of American life.

Black intellectuals have nonetheless packaged their pluralism in intricate varieties. For example, while the Harlem Renaissance or New Negro movement among the post-World War I generation represented the first assertion of the cultural salience of blackness vis-à-vis white America, this movement was also a milieu or agency through which Afro-American intellectuals gained some creative autonomy vis-à-vis their own ethnic group.

While coming together under the umbrella of the Harlem Renaissance movement, some black intellectuals simultaneously latched onto a homosexual subculture (Countee Cullen); some reached out to the political left, both socialist and communist (Claude McKay); some nested with elite bohemian circles (Zora Neale Hurston); and some flirted with all of these (Langston Hughes). It is precisely this complexity of the intellectual pursuit that Langston Hughes had in mind when he wrote the manifesto of the Harlem Renaissance in a famous 1926 *Nation* article ("The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain," June 23, 1926):

> We younger Negro artists who create now intend to express our individual dark-skinned selves without fear or shame. If the white folks seem pleased we are glad. If they are not it doesn't matter. We know we are beautiful. Ugly too. The tom-tom cries and the tom-tom laughs. If colored people are pleased, we are glad. If they are not, this displeasure doesn't matter either. *We build our temples for tomorrow, strong as we know them, and we stand on top of the mountain, free within ourselves.*

Black, Pluralist, and Conservative

WHILE THE PLURALIST INTELLECTUAL IDENTIFICATION was typically realized through liberal and left-wing networks, there has always been an alternative route. In Britain and Europe, conservative and even aristocratic classes have facilitated cosmopolitanism, cross-ethnic relations, and intellectual experimentation. Historically, European intellectuals carrying a pariah stigma (Jews, Irish, Bretons, and others) could sometimes gain creative autonomy through a conservative-mediated pluralism. On the other hand, the insecurity surrounding social status in the American establishment ranks (usually dominated by WASPs) has severely limited tolerance for pluralist life-styles among intellectuals. Thus cultural attitudes in the American establishment have often been parochial and aggressively anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, and racist.[6]

So the typical black intellectual in search of creative autonomy usually gravitated toward left-wing networks. However, with time, the American establishment has opened up just enough to attract some autonomy-seeking black intellectuals. Thus George Schuyler, a

[5] David Bradley, "Novelist Alice Walker," *New York Times* Magazine, January 8, 1984.

[6] See E. Digby Baltzell, *The Protestant Establishment* (New York: Random House, 1964).

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brilliant figure in the 1920s New Negro movement, shed his left-wing ties in the 1940s and '50s in favor of right-wing networks, becoming in the postwar era the first black intellectual associated with a major conservative journal—William Buckley's *National Review*.

Another turn toward right-wing networks by black intellectuals seeking pluralist paths to creative autonomy occurred in the last decade, when the Afro-American economist Thomas Sowell began to figure prominently in neoconservative ranks. Sowell's example has led a few other black intellectuals toward neoconservative networks—intellectuals such as Anne Wortham, a conservative sociologist at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and Walter Williams, a conservative economist at George Mason University.

This entry of black intellectuals into the neoconservative circles was made possible by the earlier penetration of these circles by Jewish intellectuals in the late 1960s and early 1970s—an event, extraordinary in many ways, that ended the long-standing taint of anti-Semitism in the conservative establishment.

In some respects, the pluralist posture of right-wing black intellectuals differs from that of their left-wing counterparts. For while both share a measure of alienation from mainstream sectors in their ethnic group—that is, from the cultural ethnocentrists and the black bourgeoisie—the left-wing black intellectuals are viewed more favorably by the black establishment, owing to the broad consensus they share on public policy. What is unique about right-wing black intellectuals like Sowell, Williams, and Wortham is their sharp divergence from the black establishment's policy orientation.

At the bottom of this policy split is the right-wing black intellectuals' fidelity to laissez-faire, or marketplace capitalism, an approach that is as widely rejected by the black establishment as it is accepted by the white one. In several books, including *Markets and Minorities* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), Thomas Sowell criticizes the use of affirmative-action policies to advance job opportunities for blacks. In *The State Against Blacks* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1983), Walter Williams attacks several areas of government intervention on behalf of the poor, such as minimum-wage policy. And in *The Other Side of Racism* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1981), Anne Wortham offers a sophomoric polemic against the basic precepts of modern civil-rights and human-rights agitation, claiming that

> . . . the [Rosa] Parks and [Lester] Maddox cases [*re* segregated buses and restaurants] show that, having rendered human rights arbitrary, legislators and courts have progressively evaded the difference between public and private property. . . . But there is no way in a free society that the law can be used to the advantage of one citizen at the expense of another without infringing on the rights of both.

A new feature of the small cadre of right-wing black intellectuals is that for the first time they have respectable political allies among whites. There are now powerful persons and groups in the white establishment who nurture black neoconservatives and join with them on many social issues, while rejecting the anti-black posturing of the rabid racists. Though it is doubtful that the ranks of right-wing black intellectuals will expand very much in the near future, the skill with which Sowell has navigated their emergence will ensure at least a modest growth. This growth is aided by the pluralist elements in the Reagan administration who have recruited talented, conservative black intellectuals such as Allan Keyes, a Harvard-trained political theorist who until recently held the post of ambassador to the Economic and Social Council of the U.N. and now is assistant secretary of state in charge of international organizations.

Furthermore, there are now more conservative black intellectuals in the fields of policy analysis, financial analysis, and business management. Typical is economist Glenn Loury, a neoconservative public-policy analyst who gained a professorship at the Kennedy School of Government in 1984. In a rather naive article on a policy agenda for Afro-Americans, Loury chides "prominent black leaders [who] cluster at the left wing of the Democratic Party . . . ," and he considers it a major weakness of black politics today that "those moderate and conservative blacks, who might be able to find common ground with . . . President

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[Reagan], have no standing as leaders either with the press, or with the masses of black people."

Thus the emergence of a small cluster of neoconservative black intellectuals marks an important crossroads in the life cycle of the Afro-American intelligentsia. Neoconservative black intellectuals such as Thomas Sowell, Walter Williams, Eileen Gardner, Glenn Loury, and Robert Woodson have broken free of the stultifying uniformity in life-style that is so pervasive among bourgeois blacks in general and among the black intelligentsia too. As a result, neoconservative black intellectuals now have more visibility as partisans of intellectual pluralization among blacks than do progressive black intellectuals—a reversal of the historical pattern. Progressive intellectuals—black and white—should take this challenge seriously, for neoconservatives such as Sowell and Williams are pathetically uncritical of the American establishment's plutocratic pretensions—pretensions aggressively reinforced under two Reagan administrations.

The entry of black intellectuals into the American conservative establishment may well be a harbinger of an evolving "Americanistic" legitimation of the black intelligentsia. When finally realized, this legitimation—only recently accorded the Jewish and Catholic intelligentsia—would mean that black intellectuals are capable of satisfying the WASP establishment's nationalistic and ideological predilections. Some bourgeois blacks will, alas, take pleasure in the fact that black Americans now have their Norman Podhoretzes and Pat Buchanans.

Whither Afro-American Intellectuals?

ARENAS FOR DEFINING A PLURALIST IDENTITY in America are more plentiful for black intellectuals today than they were in any earlier period. The key to this new situation is a generation of college-educated whites who, because of the counterculture movement of the 1960s and '70s, are shaking off the psychocultural impediments to cosmopolitan life-styles.

A good measure of this change is found in the high rates of cross-ethnic marriages. Over 50 percent of Jewish males in some recent years have married gentile women (70 percent in Colorado), and a comparable proportion of Japanese-American males have married white women. In the 1970s there were record-setting rates of black/white marriages—well over 100,000, compared to less than half of that in the 1960s.

At some of the white colleges interracial dating is widespread (80 percent for black males and over 60 percent for black females at Harvard College) and a survey of several thousand students in Boston found that only 17 percent of black students, 13 percent of Hispanics, and 7 percent of white students considered this behavior stressful. A new generation of college-educated Americans is freeing itself of the racial neuroses of American civilization.

Precisely how fast Afro-American intellectuals will avail themselves of this new opportunity for a pluralist identity—a cosmopolitanizing of their creative networks—is uncertain. It surely will take time. Racial exclusiveness characterized the intellectual life of blacks during the period 1967–76, organized through such magazines as *Black World* (now defunct) and the *Black Scholar* as well as in black caucuses within national academic associations. Yet this ethnocentrism has declined among black intellectuals since the 1970s, as witness the aesthetic pluralism of black dance groups (such as the Dance Theater of Harlem), of screenwriters and filmmakers such as Ernest Dickerson and Spike Lee, and of such black feminist writers as Alice Walker and black science-fiction writers as Samuel Delany.

A MUCH-NEEDED ASSISTANCE to this shift from ethnocentrism to pluralism could be given by new journals—journals committed to rigorous pluralist aesthetic innovation and societal appraisal. The focus of such journals, run and shaped by black intellectuals, should be both black and American, and interracial in participation—offering a new generation of black intellectuals a range of cross-ethnic and pluralist relationships.

Such a new focus is one of the major needs of today's black intelligentsia. This need arises out of the political effectiveness blacks have so painstakingly achieved over the past 20 years; out of the growth and deghettoization of the

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black middle and upper strata and, above all, out of the persistent crisis of unemployment and poverty that now grips a third of Afro-American households.

The complex pattern of both progress and poverty among black Americans lacks a major journal that could serve as a forum for discussion, appraisal, and prescription. This lack reflects, I fear, a terrible malaise at the core of the Afro-American intelligentsia: it is a pathological drag on releasing the talents of a new generation of black intellectuals from the cathartic chains of ethnocentrism, especially now that the white-racist barriers, once so fierce and neurotic, are weakening.

WHAT, THEN, ARE THE PROSPECTS for quickening the pace of cosmopolitanization for a new generation of Afro-American intellectuals?

My own scenario sees the typical black intellectual moving from ethnic parochialism to cosmopolitanism by fits and starts, while a few black intellectuals—those seeking deeper commitment to the life of the mind—will make a clean-and-sharp break with black ethnocentrism. For many the experience of ethnic politicization through Black Studies programs—usually at predominantly white colleges—precludes sudden disengagement. After all, many black intellectuals have gained academic jobs and influence in those Black Studies programs. Disengagement from black ethnocentrism—emotionally and ideologically—will therefore take time.

The more gregarious black intellectuals will seize the new opportunity for pluralism, aided by the earlier examples of such disengagement set by Maya Angelou, Julius Lester, and Larry Neal in the 1970s, and more recently by the playwright Ntozake Shange. In an interview in London in May 1984 Shange commented on the intellectual parochialism of some black American college students (she had in mind members of what she called "a neoblack nationalist sixties-type group"), especially their political naiveté about Africa's authoritarian patterns:

> Black Americans have a lot of catching up to do. There is a lot of naive nostalgia about Africa that doesn't connect with the Africans that exist at all. [Africa] isn't seen as a political entity.[7]

But even among black intellectuals who are returning to pluralism—or affirming it for the first time—some will continue to inhabit a hybrid status between cosmopolitanism and ethnocentrism. In this intermediate position black intellectuals will gradually surrender chauvinistic pretentions, borrowing some of their aesthetic and ideological canons from new pluralist milieus but not yet joining forces with them, owing to their persistent ties to ethnocentrism.[8]

This, then, is a sort of cerebral disengagement—broadening the creative resources as the intellect reaches toward the pluralist turf, while the emotions cling to ethnic catharsis. The importance of this cerebral disengagement from ethnocentrism is that it depletes the ranks of those black intellectuals who hanker after the bourgeois pretentions of monopolizing blackness. Thus, in time (and rather sooner than later), a growing number of black intellectuals will come face to face with Ralph Ellison's searching pluralist imperative—that a black monopoly on blackness is both unattainable and undesirable in American society.

This pluralist imperative has been recognized for some time by leaders of the religiously oriented forms of black ethnocentrism. For example, by the Garveyites' African Orthodox church in the 1920s and '30s and the Black Muslims in the period from the 1950s to the 1970s, who favored, as a solution to the crisis of blackness in white society, migration to the African homeland, rather like Zionists favoring migration to Israel. The mainstream of ethnocentrist black intellectuals, however, has been aggressively secular, ignoring responses to the crisis of blackness that emanate from religiously oriented forms of black ethnocentrism.

The mainstream among black ethnocentrists has also ignored an even more salient aspect of Afro-American cultural forms, what Ralph Ellison and Orlando Patterson have characterized as their inherently modern dimension: the

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[7] Quoted in Moremi Charles, "This Side of the Rainbow," *West Africa* (London), June 4, 1984, p. 1165.

[8] For an intelligent example of the "hybrid" black intellectual, see Houston A. Baker, Jr., *Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

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fact that classical Negro cultural-expressive patterns were fashioned through intense cross-cultural relations. Blackness, therefore, is intrinsically cosmopolitan. It exhibits powerful appeal across ethnic, racial, and national boundaries, even for those who would denigrate blacks and their ways. Blackness belongs to everybody, impervious to chauvinistic claims.

Accepting the cosmopolitan aura of blackness is, then, essential to weaning a new generation of black intellectuals from ethnocentrism's balm—a balm that soothes psychic wounds inherited from America's racist legacy while stunting creativity and experimentation. But as racism in American life grudgingly attenuates and as Afroization permeates ever deeper into American culture, black intellectuals can eventually resume the essential burden of the intellectual: to take one's mind seriously. □

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Shlomo Avineri

The "Russian Question" —in the 19th Century

The debacle of the 1848 revolution was a severe shock to most European radicals of that period. The resilience of the *anciens régimes* proved that, contrary to revolutionary prophecies, the millennium was not around the corner. If the powers-that-be withstood such a powerful revolutionary wave, how were they ever going to be toppled?

The disillusion was strongest among German radical revolutionaries. Many emigrated to the United States. Some, like Arnold Ruge and Bruno Bauer, slowly slid into cooperation with conservative circles and reemerged, decades later, as spokesmen for Bismarckian politics. Many just dropped out, quietly slipping into obscure and respectable bourgeois existence. Karl Marx, in his London exile, abandoned his hopes for an imminent social upheaval, stayed away from the more radical, Jacobin elements of the League of Communists, and immersed himself in his journalistic and scholarly work, expecting the long-range internal contradictions of capitalist society to bring about the dissolution of the bourgeois order. Only in the 1860s did he return to some sort of political activity in connection with the First International; even there he was a moderating influence against the more extreme Blanquists and Bakuninists.

In the post-1848 debate about the prospects of the revolution, Moses Hess developed a number of interesting ideas that deserve closer scrutiny. A few years older than Marx, alternatively close to him and quarreling with him, Hess came from the same left-Hegelian milieu that had nourished pre-1848 German socialist radicalism. After being active with Marx and Engels in the Rhineland in 1848-49, Hess found refuge in Paris, where he lived until his death in 1875.[1]

In 1850, the German emigres were greatly excited by the appearance of a German translation of an anonymous pamphlet by Alexander Herzen, *From the Other Shore*.[2] Hess replied to this pamphlet, and his response brings out both his continued belief in the eventual victory of socialism, as well as his relationship to Marx's thought at that crucial period. It also sheds some fascinating light on his attitude toward Herzen's idea that socialism would conquer Europe from the East, from Russia.

For this was the main thrust of Herzen's pamphlet. He argued that Europe had exhausted itself: the failure of the European revolutions of 1848 had proved once and for all that the West could not become a source of any future transformation. Europe was old, sick, decadent; it had no vigor, no regenerative potential; its role in world history had already been accomplished. The next world-historical nation would be the Russian nation: primeval, young, and uncorrupted, carrying within itself a religious and social message of redemption, preserving within its institutions an ancient communitarian tradition. Only a Russian revolution, spreading westward, could transform Europe. Just as at the time of the decline of the

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Roman Empire, redemption again will come from the East: *ex Oriente lux*.

Between February and April–May of 1850, Hess wrote five letters to Herzen, who was also living in Paris at that time, and in these he takes issue with the ideas of *From the Other Shore*. The original drafts of these letters have been preserved, as has been one reply by Herzen. Hess intended to publish his letters as a pamphlet, under the title *Letters to Iskander*,[3] but they were not published in his lifetime and have only come to light relatively recently.

In his first letter to Herzen, written in February 1850, Hess expresses agreement with many of Herzen's general ideas, including the similarities he found between the early Christian apostles and the socialist revolutionaries.[4] Yet when he discusses Herzen's specific political and historical analysis, Hess disagrees with him sharply.

First and foremost, Hess expresses his criticism of what he calls Herzen's mysticism and his reluctance to address himself to the real, economic and social conditions of historical change; he opposes Herzen's voluntarism and disregard for social analysis. But then he goes further: Herzen is, on the one hand, a philosopher, imbued with the European tradition. But he is also a Russian, and to his Russian background Hess traces Herzen's assumption that the future belongs to the Slavonic people:

> But there is another element, beyond the philosophical, which distinguishes your mode of thought from mine. . . . You belong to a family of nations which has remained alien to the historical development of Europe: you are a Russian. . . . And as a Russian, you confront European history even with some animosity. . . . As a philosopher, you do not want to project yourself into the future; but as a Russian, you prophesy that the Slav family of nations will inherit the European one, because the latter is too old and too weak to regenerate itself from its own resources. For you, as a philosopher, the future hides in its womb innumerable possibilities; as a Russian, the womb of the future harbors for you only a Slav invasion.[5]

Following Herzen's analogy with the decline of the Roman Empire, Hess maintains that the modern proletarians may indeed be the contemporary equivalent of the ancient barbarians—but he also hopes that they will bring about not only the destruction of capitalist civilization, but also its regeneration. Precisely because of this, Hess maintains, he is careful to distinguish between what he calls "progressive" and "reactionary" socialism. In Russia, he continues, he sees only traits of "reactionary socialism." The Russian village commune, which to Herzen signifies the pristine purity of Russian life, is to Hess a fossil. The lack of historical development in Russian society—for Herzen a sign of its uncorrupted nature—is for Hess's dialectical thinking proof of its stagnation. Such stagnation cannot be the harbinger of a New Life, only the progenitor of more stagnation:

> All that you have told me about the Russian commune reinforces my view of the contemplative, ahistorical, stable nature of these [Slavonic] nations. I admit that the Slavs can turn our Europe into a modern Byzantium, into an occidental China—but they cannot make Europe into a social democratic republic, if Europe does not liberate itself. I, at least, will do whatever I can to spare our part of the world from such a terrible catastrophe. . . .
>
> I admit that there can be no free Europe without a free Russia. But why do you want to make European freedom dependent upon Russian domination? [6]

The revolution, Hess concludes his first letter, will not be carried by one nation: he reiterates his earlier views, originally expressed in *The European Triarchy*, that no nation—neither the French, nor the Germans, nor the English—has a monopoly over the revolutionary future. Out of this internationalist perspective he opposed Herzen's ethnocentric view of the future of socialism depending exclusively on a Russian revolution and its importation by force into Europe:

> The ultimate victory of the social revolution will not be one day's work, nor will it be the work of one nation or family of nations. I believe that Russia and the Slavs cannot remain alien to the revolution just as England and North America cannot remain alien to it. Once the revolution breaks out . . . it will not win unless the old antagonistic interests disappear as well as the separation of races and classes. . . . For me, the

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victory of reaction and the separation of national interests are identical, just as the victory of the revolution is identical with the fraternization of all nations.

No "Apostle of the People" can sympathize with the idea of racial strife. I, at least, cannot accept the idea of such a Slavonic invasion. *Such* a death of European civilization harbors no seeds of life, no renascence. But I hope that history, which does not repeat itself, will spare us such a second, unabridged edition of the barbarian invasions. [*Briefwechsel*, p. 246.]

The second letter of Hess to Herzen, written in March 1850, introduces the same theme from another aspect. One of the more interesting reactions to the ideas expressed by Herzen in *From the Other Shore* came from the Spanish conservative thinker and statesman Donoso Cortés. In a speech made in the Spanish Chamber of Deputies and published in a French translation in Paris,[7] Donoso Cortés took up Herzen's historical parallel between the barbarian invasions and a future Russian socialist invasion of Europe. In his speech, he claimed that Herzen brought out the inner truth of socialism—that socialism is really a modern form of barbarism, and he then called upon the people of Europe to defend themselves against this barbarian, socialist onslaught, delineated by Herzen.

Hess, in his second letter to Herzen, disagrees, of course, with Donoso Cortés's equation of socialism with barbarism. Nevertheless, he questions Herzen—on lines following Donoso Cortés's argument—as to whether the image of barbarian invasions is really the promise of future European salvation. Hess also questions Herzen on the validity of the equation of the barbarian invasions with his wished-for future Russian invasion of Europe. The Germanic barbarian tribes, Hess argues, adopted Christianity from the conquered Romans, and the medieval world was built on the foundations of this Christianity, which did not originate with the barbarians but rather was adopted by them; this was the dialectics of conquest and integration.

Where is there a similar element in Herzen's vision? In Hess's words, "If one assumes that barbarians conquer an already civilized world, one has also to assume, following the laws of logic and history, that the conquerors adopt the spiritual as well as the material treasures of the conquered." (March 1850, *Briefwechsel*, p. 253.)

For Hess, the new elements of future society could not be introduced by the Slavs, nor does the historical parallel with the barbarian invasions stand up to scrutiny. Out of Russia, unfortunately, no light can come—Russia itself will have to be emancipated through the power of Western technological and social development:

> If our revolution carries the seeds of a New World, and if our antagonistic conditions of production and property are the womb out of which there will arise those harmonious conditions which would put an end to all distinctions of class and race—then, my dear friend, these conditions will not be brought about, as you think, by the Slavs with their communal arrangements.
>
> The philosopher "from the other shore" [Herzen] consoles himself with a Slavonic illusion. Do not be mistaken, dear friend! The ray of light which you discern beyond "the wave of the raging deluge" is not the rising morning star of a new day—it is nothing else but the Northern Light which illuminates the bleakness of an Eternal Night. [*Briefwechsel*, p. 253.]

As if to soften this uncompromising condemnation, Hess adds in a postscript to this letter:

> I do not deny the possibility of a victory of barbarism. I only deny the possibility that the revolution can reach its goal through ways which deflect it from this goal. . . . I know you are a revolutionary; but, dear, dear friend, you may be mistaken about the aims of the revolution. . . . [*Briefwechsel*, p. 253.]

But Hess is not content with merely criticizing Herzen's advocacy of a European revolution imported on Russian socialist bayonets: he also tries to suggest that there is, despite the defeat of 1848, a revolutionary hope in Europe itself—and in this exposition he moves very clearly to Marx's view of that time, stressing the economic basis of historical development.

In his third letter to Herzen, written in late March or early April 1850, Hess again tries to

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mitigate some of his harsh condemnation of Herzen's ideas by relating them to the discouraging conditions in Western Europe:

> I know quite well that only out of despair of a European revolution do you console yourself with your Slavonic illusions; once conditions in Europe, in France, in Paris, will be again more favorable for a revolution, the Slavonic illusion will fade into the background. But you lost hope so easily in the European revolution because you view it solely, or primarily, from its ideological side. [*Briefwechsel*, p. 256.]

This, according to Hess, is the mistake of all those who lost faith in the revolution: those who gave up the hope of revolution are mistaken in that they view the revolution only from its theoretical and philosophical aspect. They tend to overlook the real, material base of political life—and in this, Herzen and those like him are similar to conservative thinkers, such as Donoso Cortés, who also were blind to economic realities. Historical reality, Hess argues in his first letter, should not be viewed exclusively from a philosophical point of view:

> The focus of all life is its economy, the mode through which every living creature produces its material existence. I know no other criterion for the evaluation of social life except that of social economy. In society, just as anywhere else, the mode of production is the focus around which revolve all the modes of life: in the historical life of conscious beings, it is also the focus of all modes of consciousness. [*Briefwechsel*, p. 239.]

Philosophy, Hess continues, can never suggest an alternative society: the proletariat, on the other hand, being at the center of the modern mode of production, can paint a new world on the canvas of its active consciousness. Hess maintains that the philosophers cannot bring about the demise of the old society. This can be done, he writes in language obviously reminiscent of the concluding message of *The Communist Manifesto*, only by "those who have nothing to lose—neither spiritual nor material goods; by those who have so deeply immersed themselves into the center of social life as to have been totally identified with it" (*Briefwechsel*, p. 242).

According to Hess, the conservatives—like Herzen himself—fail to understand this, hence their inverted world view. Again in language obviously reminiscent of many of Marx's own statements,

> The reactionary Spaniard [Donoso Cortès] sees in the real historical movement only its ideological side. . . . Ideology is that mode of thinking which stands everything on its head. . . . [*Briefwechsel*, p. 249.]

Against this idea, Hess posits the ideas advocated by him—and by Marx:

> If one sees in the conditions, relations, and connections that give rise to a certain mode of production among men merely a reflection of these social conditions in human consciousness, only a spiritual nexus, then one sees in the abolition of these social conditions just the abolition of spiritual connections which are only reflected in the movements of the original. In such fashion, one turns the tender flower of social life —i.e., morality and religion—into its root, the top of the pyramid is transformed into its base, and one imagines that one can reconstruct the old, already dissolved social relations by reconstructing the old spiritual connections. . . .
>
> If you want to know the difference between your own ideological and our realistic or, if you wish, materialist view of history, compare your own assessment of French history from the July Revolution of 1830 to the June battles of 1848 (as you have described it in your recent letters) with Marx's judgment on this period [in his *The Class Struggles in France 1848–1850*, first published in serialized form and beginning] in the first number of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung, Politisch-ökonomische Revue* [edited by Marx himself in London]. . . .[8]

Hess argues that such a view, based on the material analysis of real economic conditions, would focus attention not on Russia—but on England. True, in 1848–1849 France and Germany failed to produce viable revolutions—not because Europe was "exhausted" by some nebulous spiritual standards, but because economic infrastructures were not yet ripe for change and transformation. Yet the alternative to France and Germany is not the stagnant Slavonic world, with its fossilized communes and autocracy, but the industrial development of England. Paradoxically, the socialists now turn to the country that did not experience any revolution in 1848. It is Herzen's lack of economic understanding that causes him to look for chimerical solutions in the Russian steppes:

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> For the economic revolution—the form under which England will participate in the movement of our age—you, as a political ideologue, have no understanding at all. You will be surprised to hear that the nonillusory, practicable part of the economic ideals of Proudhon and his powerful party in France is now being carried out in England and that consequently England is now nearer to a proletarian revolution than the continent or even France. . . .[9]

Finally, Hess compares Herzen to Proudhon and castigates him for a utopian vision of social development that abstracts from the realities of historical life:

> Had you perceived communism not as a Utopia, but in its political meaning, as a historical movement, as a proletarian revolution, as a battle of the proletariat for its emancipation from the domination of the bourgeoisie, as the striving of the workers to liberate themselves from their protectors and from the lords of their labor in order to organize their labor by themselves—had you, in one word, perceived communism as a class struggle. . . . [*Briefwechsel*, p. 256.]

Hess's letters to Herzen were never published during his lifetime, and hence they had no impact on his contemporaries. But they do show an insight that, besides giving us fresh material about the relationship between Hess and Marx, also foreshadows developments that became historical reality only many decades later.

Notes

[1] The most extensive biography of Hess is Edmund Silberner's *Moses Hess: Geschichte seines Lebens* (Leiden, 1966). For an excellent résumé of his thought, see Isaiah Berlin, "The Life and Opinions of Moses Hess," in his *Against the Current* (New York, 1980), pp. 213–51. See also my "The New Jerusalem of Moses Hess," in Alkis Kontos, ed., *Powers, Possessions, and Freedom: Essays in Honour of C. B. Macpherson* (Toronto, 1979), pp. 107–18.

[2] *Von dem anderen Ufer: Aus dem russischen Manuskript* (Hamburg, 1850).

[3] "Iskander" (Alexander) was Herzen's pseudonym.

[4] Hess to Herzen, February 1850, in Moses Hess, *Briefwechsel*, E. Silberner, ed. (The Hague, 1959), pp. 240–41.

[5] *Briefwechsel*, pp. 244–45. In a later letter to Herzen, not part of the "Letters to Iskander" series, Hess again maintains that Herzen's Russian patriotism clouds his vision (November 1851, *Briefwechsel*, pp. 278–79).

[6] *Briefwechsel*, p. 245. Hess refers here to an earlier work of his, *Die europäische Triarchie* (1841), where in an Appendix called "Russian Politics" he warns against the dangers of a socialism imported from Russia (see Moses Hess, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, ed. H. Lademacher, Köln, 1962, pp. 125–26).

[7] Donoso Cortés, *Situation générale de l'Europe: Discours prononcé le 30 Janvier à la Chambre des Députés de l'Espagne*, Paris, 1850.

[8] *Briefwechsel*, pp. 252, 256–57. After this reference to Marx, there follows a passage that was not included in the final version of the letter sent to Herzen. In this passage Hess paints a very telling picture of Marx—and also brings out the ambiguity of his own personal relationship with him and the complexity of Marx's attitude to his colleagues: "It is such a terrible pity that . . . this man [Marx], the greatest genius of our movement, is not satisfied with the recognition given to him by all who justly know and honor his achievements; rather, he demands a personal kind of submission which I, at least, am not ready to render to any human being" (*Briefwechsel*, p. 256).

[9] *Briefwechsel*, p. 258. Hess goes on to suggest (p. 261) that with the emergence of an economic crisis in England, a world crisis and a subsequent proletarian victory would follow. □

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Gary Gerstle

The Politics of Patriotism

Americanization and the Formation of the CIO

Patriotism, in conservative periods like our own, is a tool used by the right to bludgeon labor and the left. In the 1980s, corporations are said to represent the essence of American civilization—unions its denial. Such ideological attacks on the labor movement and its social-welfare programs have contributed to a steep decline of labor's power and influence.

There are no simple answers to labor's dilemma, but history does suggest a model for recovery. The 1980s are similar in many respects to the 1920s, when a conservative Americanization campaign, designed to weed out cultural dissenters and political radicals from American life, decisively weakened the power of labor and the left. Yet the very success of this Americanization campaign produced unanticipated consequences. The unitary political culture fostered by the Americanizers brought the heterogeneous groups in the American working class together; and the triumph of a conservative Americanism induced many radicals and labor organizers to redefine their politics in ways that fit American political discourse. These two historical processes—the spread of a single, political culture and the efforts of labor and the left to appropriate American values and symbols for their own cause—would contribute significantly to the massive working-class insurgency that was embodied in the rise of the CIO.

The CIO's rise in the 1930s is often regarded as a natural response to the hard times of Depression America. This interpretation, however, overlooks the fact that for four long years of Depression, 1929–33, unions—whether craft, industrial, or radical—made little progress. Only the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) in 1933 moved American workers from quiescence to rebellion. The act produced a mild (if brief) economic recovery that generated jobs and made workers more aggressive in voicing grievances.

More important still was the political inspiration workers derived from this legislation. The NIRA contained a clause, 7 (a), that guaranteed workers the right to organize and bargain collectively. The clause was not meant to trigger the mobilization of America's working class, and the machinery set up to enforce it could never have succeeded in compelling employers to bargain with unions. Yet to hundreds of thousands of American workers, this clause became hard and fast evidence that the federal government had placed its authority on the side of the nation's downtrodden. Workers began joining unions in large numbers. When employers refused to bargain, workers took their protests to the streets.

In 1934, general strikes erupted in Toledo, Minneapolis, and San Francisco. That same year 400,000 textile workers from Alabama to Maine walked off their jobs in the largest industrial action in American history. These actions, in turn, generated momentum for the passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935 and for the founding of the CIO that same year. A three-year surge in organizing ensued, bringing more than 3 million mass-production workers into the ranks of organized labor. An exuberant *New York Post* journalist, Edward Levinson, would exclaim in 1938 that "labor was on the march as it has never been before in the history of the Republic." [1]

Why did so much activity result from so weak a piece of legislation? In part the answer

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lies in the skill of such labor leaders as John L. Lewis in getting across the powerful message, "The President Wants You to Join a Union." It did not take long for that message to travel by radio throughout the land. But a more important part of the answer lies in the character of a political culture that made workers receptive to patriotic appeals. The decisive feature of that culture was a reverence for the country's political heritage, values, and institutions.

Many workers first experienced Americanization during World War I. Political and cultural authorities, worried about the huge number of European immigrants and their children in the nation's cities, began demanding that all ethnic minorities demonstrate their unswerving devotion to America and its "War for Democracy." Cultural conformity—100 percent Americanism—rapidly became a test of political loyalty. Government organizations such as George Creel's Committee on Public Information and Frances Kellor's National Americanization Committee orchestrated the "crusade."

Local public and private institutions—such as elementary schools and adult education programs, patriotic hereditary societies like the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), fraternal organizations like the Knights of Columbus, plus Chambers of Commerce, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the prowar National Security League, and employers like Henry Ford—they all put Americanization at the top of their agenda. Americanization activities commonly involved courses in English, civics, and American history, vigorous promotion of naturalization, and extravagant celebrations of patriotic holidays. As employers entered the Americanization campaign, Americanization also began to aim at making immigrants into productive and compliant workers.

The fears generated by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution made tests of political loyalty far more stringent. Americanizers began demanding that immigrants give unqualified support to "quintessentially American" political beliefs, such as the sanctity of private property and free enterprise, and that immigrants renounce any affinity for "un-American" ideologies such as socialism.

Woodrow Wilson's administration secured the passage of the Espionage and Sedition Acts that permitted the government to prosecute individuals or organizations whose language was said to profane the Constitution, the flag, or the military. Private citizens joined the campaign against subversion. Henry Ford employed spies from the American Protective League, a private espionage organization endorsed by the Justice Department, to uncover unionists and radicals within the ranks of his foreign-born workers. Many radicals were summarily fired; budding cells of unionists were infiltrated.

The surge of unionism and radicalism in the war's immediate aftermath—especially the nationwide steel strike and the Seattle general strike of 1919—reveals how such efforts to shape a compliant work force failed. The Americanizers intensified their efforts. A Senate committee investigating the 1919 steel strike ascribed the unruly and radical sentiments of so many workers to their foreign character and called for renewed emphasis on Americanization.

Numerous patriotic groups, ranging from the well-established DAR to the newly established American Legion, concentrated on Americanization. Employers from around the country gathered in Massachusetts in 1919 to accelerate the Americanization of their employees. Boy Scouts went door to door in many immigrant communities distributing invitations to Americanization classes. By 1921 most universities and teachers' colleges had placed Americanization training in their curricula. By 1922 the Federal Bureau of Education was distributing the *Federal Textbook on Citizenship Training* to more than 3,500 communities to aid local efforts in Americanization.

Many scholars have mistakenly viewed the virtual closing of immigration gates in 1924 as the termination of the Americanization movement. What they have overlooked is the degree to which Americanizers, by 1924, had institutionalized their programs. From 1917 to 1927, each of the nation's 48 states passed laws requiring the teaching of the essentials of citizenship to all schoolchildren.

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Citizenship training was hardly impartial. The scholar Charles Merriam charged that civics training often was being used to legitimate the existing political and social order by defending "the ideology of the propertied group against that of the Communist or other radical propaganda."

Robert and Helen Lynd, authors of the sociological classic *Middletown*, discovered a long section in Indiana's 1921 *Manual for Elementary Schools* explaining to teachers why the right of revolution no longer existed in America.[2]

Americanization as a device to legitimate the conservative order remained as pervasive in capital-labor relations as in education. The government cracked down on the civil liberties of radicals, destroying radical and "un-American" organizations such as the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) during the Palmer raids of 1919. Throughout the decade radicals were treated as outlaws. The seven-year ordeal of Sacco and Vanzetti, culminating in their 1927 execution, symbolized the ostracizing of radicals from American society. When employers embarked on a parallel campaign to break the power of unions, radical or not, they, too, draped themselves in the American flag. The "American Plan" entered the vocabulary of industrial relations in the early 1920s as a term describing employers' efforts to eliminate unions. Even conservative labor leaders like John L. Lewis found themselves snubbed by industrialists and politicians.

These Americanization drives of the 1910s and 1920s deeply influenced the culture and politics of American workers. A consequent steep 1920s' rise in the percentage of naturalized citizens among Eastern and Southern European immigrants—from approximately a quarter to a half of all Poles, Yugoslavs, Italians, and Hungarians, for example—points to the rapid progress of Americanization.

Citizenship training spread a conservative Americanism throughout the land. This Americanism encouraged conformity and promised economic success to all those willing to work for it. From the textile cities of New England to the refinery towns of the mid-Atlantic states to the steel towns of western Pennsylvania and Ohio, alliances of employers and middle-class ethnics conducted Americanization campaigns to win working-class allegiance to conservative political values. Trade-union membership plummeted throughout the 1920s; trade unions declined even in those industries, such as coal and textiles, that had no share in the decade's prosperity.

The scarcity of working-class protest during the first four years of the Great Depression, 1929-33, reveals how deeply conservative Americanism had sunk its roots into working-class consciousness. Many workers could not shake loose the belief that their unemployment was the result of a personal failure, not of a massive failure of the American system.

Conservative Americanism, however, did not claim all Americans. A significant number of ethnic Americans still retained a degree of insularity within their ghetto existence. Many youths rebelled against their education, usually not against specific elements of civics instruction but against the disciplinary function of schooling itself. Some youths became more self-consciously political. They took their American civics lessons truly to heart and sought to reinterpret them in light of their own social experience. Rather than accept the equation of Americanism with political conservatism, they began to point out that poverty and inequality violated the promise of American life, and they found in American political traditions the ideals and language to legitimate liberal and radical politics.

One of these political youths was Vito Marcantonio of Dewitt Clinton High School in Manhattan. An avid student of American history, Marcantonio began using the political principles of the Founding Fathers to support a critique of the poverty and insecurity that burdened the lives of Italian working men and women in his East Harlem community. While still a student in the early 1920s, he took charge of citizenship classes at La Casa del Popolo, a community center in East Harlem, and imparted his radical understanding of American history to the Italian workingmen enrolled in his courses. After graduation, Marcantonio served an apprenticeship with Fiorello

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La Guardia and eventually replaced him as U.S. representative from New York's 18th Congressional District. In Congress, although a Republican, he regularly perched himself to the left of FDR. After 1936 he developed close ties to the Communist party.

In a 1947 response to a constituent's query about how to introduce his Czechoslovak bride to "American life and letters," Marcantonio recommended "the writings of Jefferson, Paine, Lincoln, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt." "Carl Sandburg's life of Lincoln," he added, "would give her a thorough idea of the traditions and lives of the American people." [3]

WALTER AND VICTOR REUTHER, leaders of the CIO drive in the automobile industry, also found inspiration for their radical political ideas in American history. Their father, an immigrant German committed to socialism, stressed the importance of education. But in the working-class world of Wheeling, West Virginia, high school was something of a luxury. Walter dropped out of school at 16 in 1924 and apprenticed himself as a toolmaker, in part to pursue his interest in industrial arts and in part to help support the family and permit his two younger brothers to stay in school. Still, when Walter left for Detroit in 1927 to find work, he carried with him a determination to complete his high-school education.

In the fall of 1928, at age 21, he enrolled in the Fordson High School in Dearborn while working an afternoon-to-midnight shift as a die leader at Ford Highland Park. Somehow he found time to organize a 4C Club (standing for cooperation, confidence, comradeship, and citizenship), an organization the local Chamber of Commerce held in high esteem. Members of 4C carried out the obligatory civic obligations—"selling candy and drinks at games in order to raise money for disadvantaged students"; but its real purpose, Victor Reuther wrote, was to bring together older people who had returned to school while holding full-time jobs. Walter and fellow club members like Merlin Bishop, later active in the UAW, moved easily from civics and self-help to radical politics.

When Victor arrived in Detroit in 1930, he and Walter enrolled in the College of the City of Detroit (now Wayne State University) and immediately organized a Social Problems Club, which they affiliated with the socialistic League for Industrial Democracy. They read works by American and English radicals, fought to block the introduction of ROTC on campus, set up a housing cooperative, sponsored public meetings and, in 1932, campaigned for Norman Thomas.

Such activity did not require repudiation of their civic consciousness, only a reinterpretation. When Walter and Victor produced a brochure in the Depression's early years exposing the great disparity between the rich and the poor, they introduced it with a parody of the Gettysburg Address dramatizing the gulf between American ideals and American realities:

> Fourscore and seven years ago, our forefathers brought forth on this continent a new economic system conceived of the policies of "laissez faire" and dedicated to the proposition that private profit is the sole incentive to progress. Now we are engaged in a great economic struggle, testing whether . . . any nation so deceived and so dedicated to rugged individualism can long endure. . . . [4]

The Reuther brothers, like Vito Marcantonio, had found in the spirit of Abraham Lincoln the spur to radical political action.

The talents of Marcantonio and the Reuther brothers were not, of course, typical of second-generation Americans. But these individuals shared with ever-increasing segments of the American working class a deeply felt civic consciousness. And the determination to root their radicalism in American political culture would later enable them to convince many moderate, even conservative workers to reinterpret American political traditions in ways that validated their own experience. Marcantonio and the Reuthers would trigger no mass conversions to communism or socialism among their constituencies, but they would mobilize large numbers of workers to support the new industrial unions and the emerging social welfare state.

In the 1920s, many trade unionists desperately sought to evade the stigma of "un-Americanism," even trying to prove their organizations'

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devotion to "God and Country" by denouncing radical unions and political parties. Occasionally these fearful conservative unionists admitted that knee-jerk antiradicalism could not solve labor's problems.

In his book *The Miners' Fight for American Standards* (1925), John L. Lewis, then president of the United Mine Workers, offered a remarkably candid statement on his search for political legitimacy. Progressive social movements in America, he reflected, rarely called for drastic changes; instead they demanded only —

> a return to first principles—a reassertion in practice of the rules laid down by the Fathers of the Republic. . . . So broad, sound, and foresighted [was] the government structure of the Republic [he explained] that at most periods of our history a revival of those principles or adaptation of them to current conditions has been all that the most ardent champion of popular rights or proponent of public welfare need ask.[5]

This, Lewis emphasized, was all that his United Mine Workers of America intended to accomplish in the 1920s.

Lewis tried hard to convince his public that his union, if allowed to prosper, would strengthen American capitalism and the conservative Republican party of Harding and Coolidge. Yet the work of important members of Lewis's brain trust, such as W. Jett Lauck, an academic economist who wrote speeches for Lewis from the 1920s through the formative years of the CIO, suggests the development in the upper UMW echelons of a far more creative interpretation of the first principles of the Republic.

In 1926 Lauck published *Political and Industrial Democracy: 1776–1926*, in which he argued that over the 150 years since the American Revolution the huge corporations had developed beyond the control of the nation's democratic institutions.

The dissatisfaction that these autocratic institutions engendered in their employees, Lauck wrote, triggered widespread and often violent protest, which would eventually undermine the political achievements of 1776. To preserve those achievements, democracy had to be extended from the realm of politics to the realm of the workplace.

Lauck set forth a six-part program that he felt would establish an industrial democratic society. This program began with independent labor organization, and adequate wages and conditions of employment. It then proceeded to the more ambitious goals of participation of employees in corporate management through joint management-labor committees and stock ownership. Lauck made it clear that the point of stock ownership was not to enrich employees but to give them power. He emphasized that employees must purchase stock collectively and that it should be common stock, which would give them representation on the Board of Directors. Lauck envisioned employees accumulating enough stock to acquire majority control of their corporation—a democratization of capitalist enterprise.[6]

One might dismiss Lauck's plan as impractical. Yet his work contributed to a larger ideological project: the elaboration of an alternative civic consciousness, challenging the conservative Americanism that dominated political discourse.

The popularity of the phrase "industrial democracy" among socialists in the 1920s reveals how much they, too, participated in the construction of an alternative civic consciousness. In the 1910s Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers became one of the first socialists to trumpet this concept. Some have argued that his plan for industrial democracy —a broad sharing of powers between management and labor within a capitalist framework —really signaled the start of his journey away from socialism. But this charge cannot be leveled at many other socialists who increasingly turned to the concept as a way of promoting their vision in an extremely conservative age.

In 1919, for example, the Intercollegiate Socialist Society (ISS) changed its name to the League for Industrial Democracy (LID). This change reflected fears that socialism, in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution, had become a dirty word in American discourse. To regain their legitimacy, socialists began to define their aims in Americanist discourse. Not only did the word socialist drop out of the ISS's name, it also disappeared from the name of its chief

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publication; in 1921 *The Socialist Review* was renamed *Labor Age*.

Socialists, such as Harry Laidler and Norman Thomas, who guided the LID, had difficulty translating the concept of industrial democracy into a specific political program. When Norman Thomas attempted to define what he meant by industrial democracy in 1925, he found himself laying out not a specific plan for the reconstruction of industry but a complete program for the transformation of society—unionization, nationalization, farmer cooperatives, consumer cooperatives, a workers' party, democratic control of the machinery of finance and credit, and so on.

Thomas evidently felt compelled to invest the term industrial democracy with a world of socialist meaning. Such a compulsion was politically unfortunate, since it prevented Thomas and other socialists from offering an alternative conception of industrial democracy with sufficient specificity to compete with Lauck's plan, or Sidney Hillman's plan, or the plans being put forth by liberal employers such as Edward Filene. Yet the compulsion is historically significant, since it reveals the pressures operating on socialists to redefine their radicalism in ways that would make it acceptable in American political discourse.

By adopting the phrase industrial democracy as a substitute for socialism, Thomas could invoke the name of Abraham Lincoln. "Democracy," Thomas wrote, "means, in Lincoln's phrase, government of the people, by the people, and for the people. . . . [I]ndustrial democracy is the application of that same idea to our economic life." [7]

THE DESIRE TO DEFINE a radicalism that might fit American political discourse is also apparent in the work of Louis Budenz and A. J. Muste. Budenz, a radical labor organizer and editor of *Labor Age* from 1921 through the early 1930s, began arguing that American radicals had to free themselves from all the "isms" that so pervaded European radical movements and talk to American farmers and workers in the language of the Founding Fathers. His "American approach" profoundly influenced A. J. Muste, the pacifist minister radicalized during the bitter 1919 textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Muste, who spent the 1920s as educational director of Brookwood Labor College, the leading workers' education program in the country, had been enamored of the American dream, especially as embodied in Abraham Lincoln, since his days as an immigrant youth in Michigan.

Muste viewed his radicalism as little more than an attempt to make American society correspond to the American dream. He responded enthusiastically to the "American approach" that Budenz laid out to a Brookwood audience in 1928. Soon after, the two men joined to build an American radical movement, first in the Conference on Progressive Labor Action (CPLA) set up in 1929 and then in the American Workers' party they founded in 1933. A CPLA Statement of Principles, in May 1932, declared: "We hold that the labor movement in America must grow up out of the American soil; it must face the realities of American life; it must be built and controlled by the workers of America."

At the founding convention of the National Unemployed League, Muste and his allies put their "American approach" into action. Convention organizers had chosen the July 4th weekend to demonstrate the affinity between the unemployed of 1932 and the revolutionaries of 1776. They modeled their central document, "The Declaration of Workers' and Farmers' Rights," on the Declaration of Independence. After unanimously adopting this document, the 800 delegates burst into "America, the Beautiful." [8]

NORMAN THOMAS'S SOCIALIST PARTY tried a similar American approach. Throughout 1932, Socialists had been organizing workers, farmers, and the unemployed across the country into "committees of correspondence." In May 1933, 4,000 delegates from these committees convened a Continental Congress for Economic Reconstruction in Washington. They, too, wrote a new Declaration, declaring independence from " 'the profit system of business, industry, and finance,' which had 'enthroned economic and financial kings . . . more powerful, more irresponsible, and more dangerous to human rights than the political kings whom the fathers overthrew.' " [9] A series of resolutions

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were passed that were patterned after the Socialist party program and called for the abolition of America's capitalist system and its replacement with a cooperative commonwealth.

NOT ALL RADICALS, of course, subscribed to this kind of American approach. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the Communists and Trotskyists denounced the Americanizing tendencies they encountered among Socialists and labor radicals. They looked to the Bolshevik Revolution, not the American Revolution; Lenin, not Lincoln, provided their blueprint. Such differences led to incessant squabbling among radical groups that severely hampered the development of the left in the early 1930s.

The emergence of the Communists as the dominant organization of the American left in the late 1930s has led many to conclude that internationalism structured radical discourse much more than nationalism. But such a conclusion ignores the key to the Communists' success. Their appeal rested on their ability to make themselves into the most "American" of the radical parties.

The Communists' great period of growth came after 1935 when, upon order of the Comintern, they abandoned the ultrarevolutionary politics of the Third Period and sought alliances with a broad range of progressive forces in American society. They also sought to demonstrate that "Communism was Twentieth-Century Americanism" and that Earl Browder, who traced his familial roots to 18th-century revolutionary Virginia, was a latter-day Founding Father.

The failure of the American Communist party during its Popular Front period to free itself from its subservience to Moscow and to introduce democracy into its own ranks rendered its Americanization campaign superficial; the contradiction between the party's democratic front and its authoritarian and subservient interior did much to discredit the efforts of other radicals who genuinely desired to root their radicalism in American soil. But the fact that the party attracted hundreds of thousands through its Popular Front years reveals a depth of yearning for an Americanized radicalism.

THE QUALITY of interwar radical attempts to integrate socialism with American political traditions can be debated at length. None achieved the credibility that Debsian socialism, with its deep roots in such republican traditions as citizenship, independence, virtue, and commonwealth, had once enjoyed. Arguably, American radicalism never fully recovered from the events of 1917 to 1919—political repression at home and Bolshevik triumph abroad—which wrenched American socialism from its indigenous roots.

But despite the limitations on the larger socialist project, the socialist determination to talk to American workers in a context and a language to which they could respond still yielded ample results. The "American approach" stressed by Budenz, Muste, Thomas, and others had brought many radicals closer to the majority of American workers, native-born and foreign-born alike. It enlarged the ideological ground that they shared with moderate trade unionists who had spent the conservative '20s trying to demonstrate the close links between unionism and Americanism. And it helped fashion an insurgent Americanism that would help workers rebel against their poverty and powerlessness.

The voices of trade unionists and radicals insisting on the insurgent character of American patriotism remained marginal throughout the 1920s and early '30s. But as the Depression magnified the distance between the claims of American capitalism and the performance of the economy, these voices spoke with greater authority. In a strike against Toledo Auto-Lite in early 1934, the first of the decade's full-scale battles between labor and capital, Louis Budenz and other organizers for the American Worker's party inspired thousands of Toledo workers with banners that proclaimed "1776–1865–1934." [10] As John L. Lewis increasingly took his advocacy of the CIO to the air in the spring and summer of 1936, he spread a version of the idea of industrial democracy. On July 6, 1936, over a nationwide network, Lewis threw down the gauntlet to all who would oppose "the great movement for industrial democracy" embodied in the CIO:

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> Let him who will, be he economic tyrant or sordid mercenary, put his strength against this mighty upsurge of human sentiment now being crystallized in the hearts of 30 millions of workers who clamor for the establishment of industrial democracy and for participation in its tangible fruits. He is a mad man or a fool who believes that this river of human sentiment, flowing as it does from the hearts of these 30 millions, who with dependents constitute two-thirds of the population of the United States of America, can be dammed or impounded by the erection of arbitrary barriers of restraint. [11]

The symbols and language of an insurgent Americanism pervaded the most important CIO victory of the decade—the triumph over General Motors in early 1937. When GM conceded the United Auto Workers' demand for union recognition in early 1937, the workers who made it happen—the sit-downers who had occupied GM plants in Flint, Michigan, for six weeks—emerged from the plants proudly waving American flags. John Brophy, longtime radical unionist appointed by Lewis in 1936 to direct the CIO, told the jubilant sit-downers that their victory meant "the coming of industrial democracy to the men in these great plants." [12] Both Victor and Roy Reuther, deeply involved in the Flint sit-downs, likened the ensuing celebration of Flint workers to that of a country achieving independence. Victor Reuther later recalled —

> those who doubted the morality of the sit-down in 1937 were fewer than the doubters among the population in 1775, when American independence was won by challenging the tyrannical laws . . . of the British Crown.[13]

The favorite song of the strikers, as of CIO unionists everywhere, was *Solidarity Forever*, sung to the tune of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

Such symbols, language, and music reveal the success of the unionists and radicals in transforming the conservative Americanism of the 1920s into the insurgent Americanism of the 1930s. This insurgent patriotism should not be equated with radicalism. The central concepts of the CIO's Americanism were compatible with a variety of political alternatives, ranging from socialism to corporatism to business unionism. CIO leadership and shop-floor militants of various political persuasions would fight each other for 15 years to define the political character of the CIO.

The political ambiguity of the CIO's Americanism should not be allowed to obscure its unambiguous accomplishments: it allowed workers of sharply divergent political, ethnic, and religious backgrounds to come together in a single movement for industrial unionism. It encouraged these divergent groups to connect their fight for union representation to the revered American struggle to guarantee constitutional rights. And it spread throughout unionist ranks the conviction that American workers, not American capitalists, represented the essence of American civilization—and that the future of the Republic rested squarely on the success of organized labor in reaching its goals. The lonely work of trade unionists and radicals in the 1920s in building a civics culture that was an alternative to the dominant conservative Americanism aided in crucial ways the 1930s' efforts of American workers to reclaim the American Republic as their own.

The past can never be regarded as anything but an imperfect guide to the present and future. The 1980s are not a replica of the 1920s. The internationalization of capital (and thus the pressure of international competition on American workers) is far more prevalent today than it was in the 1920s. A service and high-tech economy full of smaller, scattered firms will shape a different American working

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class than the 1920s' heavy manufacturing economy of giant, clustered corporations. The left is not only numerically weaker but far less certain of its mission. The state has lost much of its luster for radicals and liberals as agency of social transformation.

Nevertheless, the ideological climate of the 1980s is strikingly similar to that of the 1920s. Conservatives have used American patriotic culture to legitimate attacks on all those they view as impediments to capitalist enterprise. A concerted campaign to strip America's burgeoning immigrant population of traditional ethnic cultures has not yet occurred on a scale like that of the Americanization crusade of the 1910s and 1920s; but the conservative campaign to restore a more traditional form of education in American schools may soon lead to the abandonment of biculturalism and the restoration of American civics and citizenship courses as the centerpiece of high-school curricula. Such a shift in schooling could easily trigger an assault on cultural pluralism in the society at large.

To the extent that a conservative Americanism gathers force, the lessons of 1920s' radicals and trade unionists carry a message of special urgency. On the one hand, this earlier generation of dissenters accepted the power of American political culture as an accomplished fact; on the other hand, they sought to appropriate the symbols, values, and traditions of American political culture for their own causes. They understood that the future success of labor and radicals in shaping American society would likely depend on their ability to demonstrate that they, not capitalists, were the true heirs of 1776, and that the welfare of the American Republic depended on the realization of their democratic vision.

Notes

[1] Edward Levinson, *Labor on the March* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938), p. 236.

[2] Bessie L. Pierce, *Civic Attitudes in American School Textbooks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930), pp. 229–30; Charles Merriam, *The Making of Citizens* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931), p. 119; Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd, *Middletown: A Study in American Culture* (New York: Harcourt Brace & World, 1929), p. 198

[3] Alan Schaffer, *Vito Marcantonio, Radical in Congress* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1966), p. 194.

[4] Victor G. Reuther, *The Brothers Reuther and the Story of the UAW: A Memoir* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976), pp. 54–55, 61–62.

[5] John L. Lewis, *The Miners' Fight for American Standards* (Indianapolis: Bell, 1925), pp. 179–80.

[6] W. Jett Lauck, *Political and Industrial Democracy, 1776–1926* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1926), pp. 1–11, 53–129.

[7] Norman Thomas, "What Is Industrial Democracy?" (New York: LID pamphlet, 1925), p. 7; reprinted in *The League for Industrial Democracy: A Documentary History* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1980), vol 1, p. 395.

[8] Roy Rosenzweig, "Radicals and Mass Movements: The Musteites and the Unemployed Leagues, 1932–1936" (unpublished paper, Cambridge University, 1972), pp. 16–17, 50–51. For a condensed published version of this paper, see Rosenzweig's "Radicals and the Jobless: Musteites and the Unemployed Leagues, 1932–1936," *Labor History* 16 (Winter 1975), pp. 52–77.

[9] David A. Shannon, *The Socialist Party of America: A History* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), pp. 227–28.

[10] Rosenzweig, "Radicals and Mass Movements," p. 68.

[11] John L. Lewis, "Industrial Democracy in Steel," *United Mine Workers Journal* 47 (July 1936), p. 3.

[12] Sidney Fine, *Sit-Down: The General Motors Strike of 1936–1937* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969), p. 312.

[13] Reuther, *The Brothers Reuther*, p. 148. □

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Robert Howard

Toward a Brave New Workplace?

Some Political Visions

Any period of rapid change presents society with unexpected opportunities as well as unforeseen problems. The emergence of the brave new workplace is no exception. The very economic and technological forces that are the harbingers of potential disruption for many segments of the American work force and substantial social costs for American society as a whole could also be made to serve quite other ends. The condition is that we choose to do so (as individuals but also as a society), choose to shape the changes traversing the working life and harness them to different social goals. In a sense, this requires reinventing technology and work; seeing them not as the products of some ineluctable technological development, autonomous and pure, but as a sometimes messy act of social construction, built upon a foundation of a myriad interests and goals.

Until now, work and technology have reflected, almost exclusively, the interests of one institution—the private corporation and the managers who run it. The corporation's logic of profit, competitiveness, and market success at almost any price has defined the ends according to which technology has been designed and used in the workplace. As a result, it has also been the prime determinant of technology's impact on people. Of course, this is not to say that workers are entirely powerless. On the contrary, they are protesting against this corporate control of work in any way they can. When Eastern Airlines machinist Dave Boggs informally programs his computer-controlled punch press, when telephone workers at the New York City International Operating Center strike to protest job pressures, when video-display-terminal (VDT) operators engage in acts of "resistance," or when semiconductor production workers like Marta Rojas and Anita Zimmerman, disabled by exposure to toxic chemicals in Silicon Valley, take their former employers to court—they are all, one way or another, making their interests known. And this ever-present struggle makes the managerial utopia of a perfectly efficient and eminently humane brave new workplace far more problematic, more fraught with its own contradictions and unintended consequences, than most corporate managers would be willing to admit. At the worst, their desire to extend their own control over work can contradict not only workers' aspirations for autonomy but the very ends of increased productivity and efficiency that are the ostensible reasons for new technology in the first place.

Thus both equity and efficiency demand that other interests than those of the corporation be introduced into the brave new workplace. Put another way, the inherently social nature of work and technology requires that all social groups and institutions affected by the changes in working life be included—"represented"—in the decisions and choices made about those changes: the workers who actually use technology in the workplace and the unions that represent them; the designers whose technical expertise and talents are so crucial to the proper functioning of new technical systems, but who have little say about the ends to which the technology they create is put; citizens who must live with technology's impacts, whether on the health of their neighborhoods or the quality of the products and services they pur-

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chase; and, finally, government officials who approve the vast amounts of public money supporting technological research and development and, more important, are the ultimate representatives of the public good.

What would it mean to open the brave new workplace to these and other groups? How can they possibly play a meaningful role—given the constraints of international competition, the growing complexity of technology and work organization, and the power of the corporation itself? These pages suggest a few steps that are necessary for this to happen, along with the particular responsibilities of some specific social groups.

As the primary expression of workers' collective voice and collective interests, unions must take the lead in making the brave new workplace an enterprise of social choice. Organized labor, for all its current problems and organizational weakness, still remains the central institution in American society where new rights of participation and power at work will first be articulated, realized, and put into practice. No durable solution to the problems of the brave new workplace is possible without a vigorous renaissance of trade-union activity in American industry.

In order for this to happen, however, unions need to look to their past as well as to the future. More specifically, they need to recapture the idea of unionism as a social movement that offers a competing vision of the future, an authentic alternative to the corporate blueprint for the brave new workplace. Such a vision would begin by unequivocally challenging the principle of "management prerogatives" developed during the era of scientific management. And of all the areas of working life that have traditionally been considered the exclusive responsibility of the corporation, the design and development of new workplace technology may prove to be the most important.

The new technologies of the computer and advanced telecommunications constitute the central nervous system of the brave new workplace. The decisions determining their use in the workplace also intimately affect work organization, corporate investment, products and markets, even industrial efficiency itself. A strong labor movement dedicated to the social control of technology would redefine the brave new workplace in terms of traditional union values of equity, solidarity, and work as a cooperative social activity. And the role of a "trade unionism of the brave new workplace" would be to translate those union goals into concrete organizational principles for technology, work, and social life.

Such an effort would require, first of all, articulating new rights for workers and their unions to participate in the design and use of new technology at work—and to participate not merely as performers of certain vital functions (a memo from AT&T's Bell Labs calls them "roleware" to match certain hardware and software) but as the representatives of important social interests different from those of corporate management.

Some American unions have already taken steps toward defining these new rights. One example is the New Technology Bill of Rights developed by the International Association of Machinists (representing some 650,000 workers in the machine-tool, metal-working, aerospace, and airline industries). Conceived as an amendment to U.S. labor law, the document states that workers, "through their trade union and bargaining units," should have an "absolute right" to participate in all phases of management planning and decisions "that lead to the introduction of new technology or the changing of the workplace systems design, work processes, and procedures of doing work, including the shutdown or transfer of work, capital, and equipment."

The bill also defines a model for how technology should and should not be used in working life. One provision stipulates that technology should "improve the condition of work and . . . enhance and expand the opportunities for knowledge, skills, and compensation for workers." Another states that workers displaced by technological change "shall be entitled to training, retraining, and subsequent job placement or reemployment"—as a fundamental right of employment. Finally, the Machinists union proposal forbids the use of technology "to monitor, measure, or otherwise control the work practice and work standards of individual

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workers" as well as uses that threaten worker safety and health or are "destructive of the work environment."

Of course, new rights that are not recognized are really no rights at all. So a labor movement campaign for the social control of technology would also have to formulate a long-term strategy to win corporate recognition of those rights —much as the infant industrial union movement of the 1930s had to fight to win management recognition for the principle of unionism itself. This is perhaps the most difficult step of all. Unions have been so institutionalized for so long in American society that many labor leaders seem to have lost the capacity for waging long-term labor struggles, to such an extent that now, when unionism is faced with a major corporate attack, many find it difficult to respond. Should a movement to limit the corporate control of work ever gain substantial support in organized labor and the public at large, it is likely that it would face massive political opposition from the American business community. How might unions respond? Put another way, what will be the equivalent in the brave new workplace to the crucial role of the sitdown strikes to win union recognition in the 1930s?

A recent example, from Australia, dramatically suggests that unions may have a great deal more potential power in the brave new workplace than they might think. Appropriately enough, it concerns the unions of the Australian telecommunications industry. When, in the early 1980s, the management of Australia's public telecommunications agency, TELECOM, announced a plan for the comprehensive computerization of that country's telecommunications network, the industry's unions did not passively accept management's proposals. Instead, they argued that no new technical systems should be introduced without first obtaining union input and approval. And they criticized the model of work organization on which the management plan for technology was based, claiming that, much as has been the case in the United States, it would lead to the fragmentation and deskilling of the telecommunications technician's job.

But the unions didn't stop there. They took their case to the Australian public as well. They argued that TELECOM's plan, by centralizing service and maintenance functions and underestimating the amount of training necessary for those working the system, would cause telephone service to deteriorate. The unions presented an alternative proposal for the computerization of the system, one based on a decentralized work organization of local, worker-run offices. The unions even engaged in some creative industrial action to emphasize workers' importance in running a highly automated system and to cement their alliance with the public. Instead of going out on strike, the technicians in one office simply switched off the computers that collected information about residential customers' long-distance calls for billing. The telephone system worked as well as ever—and the public received free telephone service for a short period of time.

As a result of their multifaceted campaign, the unions were able to win a great deal more than the usual protective measures (which included a "no layoffs" guarantee far beyond any "job security" provision that American unions have recently won). They gained government support for a unique tryout of two competing approaches to organizing technology and work. Two computerized switching exchanges were put into operation, one organized according to management's highly centralized model, the other according to the union alternative. The tryout demonstrated that TELECOM management did not have a monopoly on organizational efficiency; the union-designed office was at least as efficient as that of management. TELECOM ultimately agreed to a model of work organization and technology that was a compromise between the original management and union proposals. The unions at the Australian telecommunications authority won the crucial right to negotiate with management over the use of new technology at work.

If unions ever are to be successful in winning similar rights in this country, there is one final task they will have to take up: the creation of new kinds of institutional expertise necessary to put those new rights into practice where it counts the most, in the workplace itself. In part, this means acquiring the technical com-

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petence to be able to analyze new technology as it is developed and evaluate its impacts on work. But even more important is developing programs of rank-and-file education, training, and activism around technology issues that teach people how technology can be made to serve their own interests and goals and allow them to contribute their own perspectives to the design of workplace technical systems.

Ironically, this may be where the recent experiments in labor-management quality-of-work-life programs will prove most important. Their ultimate significance may well be not so much in furthering company-union cooperation but in providing unions with the organizational forms and experience necessary to intervene in corporate decision-making at the shop-floor level. Participation in such programs can lead to the development of new kinds of organizational skills for union members, new internal union networks, and ultimately a taste for control on the part of rank-and-file members. (One of the most detailed surveys of union-worker attitudes in quality-of-work-life programs—conducted at MIT's Sloan School of Management—found that while cooperative programs rarely lead to increased worker control over corporate decision-making, they do cause workers to identify the acquisition of such control as an important union goal.)

One can imagine a point in the not-too-distant future when, frustrated by the limitations of conventional quality-of-work-life programs, union activists will attempt to push these shop-floor committees beyond "environmental" concerns to more substantial issues of management prerogatives and policy. As management resists such initiatives, unions may develop more independent agendas for worker participation in and influence over working life.

In the end, today's quality-of-work-life programs may be analogous to the company unions of welfare capitalism in the 1920s. Because they were creations of management, such unions were fundamentally flawed as an independent expression of the workers' collective voice. Nevertheless, involvement in these company unions taught workers important lessons about how to organize on a company-wide level, lessons that were put to good use by the independent industrial-union movement of the 1930s, when the Depression made the limitations of the company unions clear to most workers.

There are already some signs that American unions may be adopting a more independent perspective on joint labor-management cooperative programs. In their 1983 contract negotiations, the Communications Workers called for the expansion of the Technology Change Committees to include local workplace committees. The proposal was rejected by management, but in 1984 the union developed its own rank-and-file technology training program designed, according to a draft of the course materials, "to convince [members] that workers have a democratic right to be involved in the decisions about how to use new technology." And in the innovative Workplace Democracy project undertaken by the Machinists union at Eastern Airlines, participation is based upon a well-defined framework of new union rights—including seats on the board of directors, access to detailed financial information about the company, and a role in the design of new work systems. (Among other improvements in work organization and job design inspired by this effort, Dave Boggs has been able to work out an informal arrangement with management that allows him to do most of the prototype programming for the computer-controlled punch press in the Eastern Airlines sheet-metal shop.)

Would a strong labor movement for the social control of technology constitute a return to the "adversarial relationship" in American industrial relations? I prefer to think of it as an extension of labor's collective voice and the principle of negotiation and collective bargaining to a whole new area of working life. At times, such negotiation would surely involve competition and conflict as management and union strive to win workers and the public to their varying models for working life. But not all conflict is destructive; sometimes it can be the catalyst for social creativity, as the case of the Australian telecommunications unions suggests. At other times, this negotiation process would surely involve cooperation, as management and union work together to define mutually acceptable criteria for the design of tech-

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nology and work. Most of all, negotiating the shape of the brave new workplace would bring new values and new perspectives into working life, instead of excluding everything but the narrow goals of the corporation.

This is a profoundly ambitious social agenda, as daunting in its scope and its difficulty as the idea of industrial unionism must have seemed more than 50 years ago. And organized labor, surely, cannot achieve it all alone. But there are other social groups that may find the idea of exercising social choice in the brave new workplace extremely appealing. And labor must begin to reach out to them, whether through traditional union organizing or by forming new kinds of professional alliances.

According to recent research, one occupational category to be heavily hit by the technological transformations of the brave new workplace is the vast number of unorganized clerical workers in the service sector of the U.S. economy. Most of these workers are women; a great many of them, especially in urban areas, are black or members of other minority groups. Perhaps more than any other single occupational group, they are in special need of representation in the brave new workplace.

As computerization spreads up the hierarchical ladder of the corporation, those many members of the baby-boom generation who work in the corporate middle strata are also severely affected. Despite the popular image of the ambitious and successful Yuppie, more and more of them are seeing their own career hopes crushed in the squeeze between intensified labor-market competition with their generational brothers and sisters and the diminishing number of places in the upper reaches of the newly rationalized corporation. They constitute a second category of workers with a special interest in the social control of technology and work.

In addition, more and more high-technology production workers in the semiconductor and computer industries face not only low wages but work environments that threaten their very health. As these new growth industries consolidate and mature (diminishing the possibilities for advancement made possible by rapid economic growth) and as information about the health effects of work with toxic hazards in high-tech industry spreads, they may begin to see through some of the contradictions of the enchanted corporation and start searching for an alternative that a unionism of the brave new workplace could provide.

Some of the most interesting union-organizing efforts taking place today are aimed at these occupational groups. Feminist groups such as the National Association of Working Women have joined with labor unions in an effort to link issues of women's clerical work with those of office automation. The alliance has already borne some fruit. In February 1982, employees at the Syracuse, New York, claims benefit office of the Equitable Life Assurance Society—mostly female VDT operators—voted to join District 925 of the Service Employees International Union in an effort to cope with problems caused in part by managerial practices concerning new technology. In November 1984, after a nearly three-year struggle that eventually led to a nationwide boycott of Equitable by the AFL–CIO, the National Organization for Women, and other groups, the workers won a labor contract that, among other provisions, included explicit criteria for the design of computer terminals and office furniture, special rest-breaks for workers engaged in continuous VDT use, limits on computerized monitoring, and advance notice of forthcoming technological changes.

Unions in the auto and telecommunications industries have also begun to appeal to middle-level technicians and professionals caught in the vise of economic restructuring at big corporations such as AT&T, General Motors, and Ford. And networks of pro-union high-tech workers have been established in California's Silicon Valley and Massachusetts' Route 128 in a first step down the long road toward unionization. All these initiatives are elements for a broad coalition favoring public participation and social choice in working life.

But perhaps the most important occupational category with which labor should seek a dialogue and, if possible, an alliance is the rapidly expanding professional community of technical personnel whose job is to design and

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implement the new technologies of working life: the computer scientists, systems designers, software engineers, and other professionals whom I have called "technology managers." Because they occupy a strategic role in the ongoing development of the brave new workplace, they are crucial to the creation of an alternative social vision for technology and work.

Trained in the traditions of scientific management, these workers have generally seen their role as that of impartial experts of the workplace whose only task is to construct the most economically efficient and technologically proficient systems possible. Usually, they see the social dimension of working life as either an irrelevancy to be ignored or an obstacle to be eliminated (in the words of one, "replacing a part of the human with a machine"). And even those technology managers who are open to the new idea of "user participation" tend to define that participation as narrowly and instrumentally as possible. As a result, these technical experts have greatly contributed to the erosion of workers' control in the brave new workplace. Despite their veneer of technical impartiality, they have been agents of the corporate control of work.

But what if the entire process of technology design and development were understood differently—not as a matter of impersonal technical calculation, but as a kind of social dialogue among the various interest groups of the corporation? According to this perspective, user participation would extend far beyond the usual functional definition to include the idea of the "user" as a bearer of unique interests and goals. And the process of technology development itself would be defined as a complex "negotiation" in which different social groups bargain with each other over the purposes and functions of new technology and work systems.

If systems design were conceived in this way —as a "social process"—the role of the designer as an impartial technical expert would become obsolete. Instead, he or she would have to be an arbiter whose professional role and responsibility was to make explicit to different interest groups involved in the design process the various social implications of diverse technical options. The systems designer would help each group determine what uses of technology were acceptable and unacceptable to them. So the systems designer would strive to reconcile the competing needs and scenarios of corporate management, unions, professional associations, and the like. A "successful" design would be one that met at least some of the interests of all the groups involved in the design process. And the very design of new technology itself would reflect the social dialogue among the various interest groups of the work organization.

One place where some of these ideas are now being put into effect is Scandinavia. Since the late 1960s, Scandinavian unions and a small but influential group of computer scientists, engineers, and other technical specialists have been engaged in a creative social dialogue about technology and work. The technologists have served as "union consultants" to locals at metalworking shops, chemical refineries, railroad repair centers, insurance offices, and newspapers. They have helped unions explore the impact of computerized work systems and develop their own independent strategies for influencing them. In the 1970s, these "action research" projects helped articulate new union rights of participation in corporate decisions about the design and use of new workplace technology, rights that have been institutionalized in both formal collective-bargaining agreements and "work environment" legislation such as Norway's 1977 Work Environment Act. And as contact with shop-floor workers has led technical specialists to reflect on the assumptions and implications of their own work, they have begun to formulate alternative methods of "systems design" so that unions' social priorities and goals can be reflected in the technology development process. While such initiatives haven't resolved all the problems of the brave new workplace, they have certainly made it easier for workers and the public to make choices about technology design and work organization.

At first glance, it would seem unlikely that American "technology managers" would be interested in a more social conception of their own work. After all, it would challenge their dominant position in the brave new workplace and seem to require them to give up some of their own independence and control. Yet, there

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are a number of reasons why at least some of these new professionals might be willing to rethink their place in the brave new workplace—reasons that have to do with their emerging and still undefined sense of themselves as members of a distinct profession.

Some will surely be interested in the idea of systems design as a social process out of the simple conviction that the effective design and implementation of new workplace technology depends upon it. They will be willing to extend the idea of user participation beyond the common superficial understanding. Others will embrace this new model of the designer's role out of a growing frustration with their own increasingly constrained possibilities in working life. As computer programming and systems design itself become subject to the same tendencies of rationalization as other occupations, at least some computer technicians and professionals are realizing that the control they thought they enjoyed in the workplace is an illusion. They may welcome the opportunity to play new roles and put their considerable talents in the service of different social goals.

And, of course, it will not be required that *all* technology managers take up these ideas for them to have a substantial social impact. Were even a small minority of concerned computer professionals to begin to speak out on the "social responsibility of the systems designer" and, as in Scandinavia, even join together informally and formally with unions and other "user representative" groups in order to create alternative approaches to planning technology and work, then the project to enlarge people's realm of choice in the brave new workplace would take a giant step.

The problems of the brave new workplace, however, exceed the capacity of particular professional groups or labor unions to address them. They extend to society as a whole. There is no better illustration of this fact than that most elementary dimension of working life, employment itself. The unemployed worker may disappear from the company balance sheet or the union membership rolls, but he or she remains a citizen. And while the corporation may be able to "externalize" the costs of economic and technological transformation, society cannot. For this reason, the brave new workplace is also a responsibility of the federal government.

Such an assertion runs against the current of prevailing political wisdom in America—the conservative denial that government has *any* role to play in working life. The Reagan administration has radically diminished the government's presence in the workplace, by dismantling basic worker occupational health and safety protections and by severely limiting union rights. However, behind the political right's ideological attack on the principle of government intervention and regulation, there is a hidden agenda of aggressive government advocacy for business interests in both the workplace and society. This advocacy intimately shapes the major influence that the U.S. government *already* enjoys in the brave new workplace—an influence that is as shortsighted as it is profoundly undemocratic.

The major public source of financial support for research and development of new workplace technology, today, is the U.S. Department of Defense. In the past decade, it has spent billions of dollars to make sure that the brave new workplace conforms to the dual imperatives of expanded corporate control and the increasing militarization of economic life. A typical example is the Air Force's Integrated Computer-Aided Manufacturing project (ICAM). From 1979 to 1984, ICAM spent $100 million in order to make the much-publicized and long-awaited "factory of the future" a reality, by developing the next generation of integrated computerized manufacturing systems. Part of the Air Force's Partners in Preparedness program, ICAM was a generous source of financial largesse for some of America's biggest corporations (primarily in the aerospace industry) and most prestigious engineering schools. It provided them with the resources to develop technologies too expensive for any of them to develop on their own. However, there is one social partner that the Air Force left out—the labor unions representing aerospace workers at many of the participating companies. From the beginning, organized labor was excluded from the ICAM project, and the Air Force repeatedly rejected

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the requests of the Machinists union for a role in the automation program.

Not surprisingly, many of the recommendations coming out of the ICAM project reflect the most rigid conception of industrial automation imaginable and the worst assumptions of the perspective that sees technology as an instrument of managerial control. For example, one conclusion is that skill requirements for shop-floor workers in the aerospace industry should be substantially diminished and that state-funded vocational education programs should be downgraded. Given the long and sorry history of corporate attempts to do away with the human element in work, these and other recommendations are extremely dubious. Nevertheless, the damage has been done.

Even as the government is supporting the most socially narrow conception of the brave new workplace through Pentagon-funded projects like ICAM, the Reagan administration has been making it *more* difficult for ordinary citizens to cope with the changes of working life. At a time when the U.S. labor market is on the edge of enormous transformations, Reagan budget cuts at the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics have forced government statisticians to limit data collection for the bureau's "occupational outlook" forecasts. As a result, the federal government is less able to provide citizens with useful information about trends in the labor market than it was five years ago.

Government could be made to play a very different role in the brave new workplace. Instead of using taxpayers' dollars to reinforce the corporate control of work, it could target these funds at initiatives to empower ordinary citizens in their workplaces, unions, and professional associations—helping them to develop the resources and skills necessary to effectively exercise influence and choice in working life. This could take place in any number of ways; many of them need not cost a great deal of money nor require the creation of new federal bureaucracies.

To give one simple example, the federal government is probably the largest purchaser of new workplace technology in America today—equipment to be used in its own offices and departments. Were the government to establish a set of social criteria for the design of the computer technology it purchased—ergonomic standards for office automation systems, for example, or procedures mandating federal office worker participation in the development and implementation of new workplace technical systems—the producers of office technology would have to respond. This would have the added impact of shaping the entire technology market. The norms established by the federal government for its own technology would become generalized throughout American industry. Using its own technology-purchasing policy is one relatively straightforward way for the government to support the introduction of social criteria into the brave new workplace.

But the federal government could also do a great deal more. Imagine that a mere tenth of the tax dollars spent on the ICAM project—$10 million—was devoted to a public program on the social implications of workplace technology. This money would be used to provide funding and expertise to a broad cross section of social and professional groups for the express purpose of helping them expand their participation in the brave new workplace. The government would work with state universities and technological institutes to establish programs for training workers and managers in the social implications of new technology and how to address them. It would support independent union efforts to develop "technology education and training" programs for rank-and-file members and fund experimental projects at nonprofit agencies, public-sector organizations, or worker cooperatives to use new technology to meet social needs. The government might also fund efforts at engineering schools or in computer science departments to develop curricula on "the social responsibility of the computer professional" or "systems design as a social process." It might even sponsor pilot projects in "participatory systems design" at selected workplaces in industry.

Ultimately, the most important role for the federal government may be to sponsor new social legislation designed to institutionalize more effective mechanisms for social intervention in working life. Specific measures might include a nationwide "labor-market informa-

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tion system" that would provide the public with accurate and timely information about trends in the labor market; publicly funded and controlled worker retraining programs to encourage the development of new work-force skills; revised U.S. labor law defining new union rights of participation in corporate decision-making; and perhaps even a comprehensive "work environment" act articulating specific society-wide goals and criteria for working life.

Of course, governmental initiatives to open the brave new workplace to the ideas and interests of diverse social groups will require broad public support. And such support can only follow on the widespread conviction among ordinary people that working life can indeed be different and that they have the power to make it so. For this reason, the social control of technology is, finally, a political project, one that replaces the empty illusion of the all-powerful and benevolent corporation with an alternative vision of work as a realm of democratic social choice. Only then will the contradictions of control in the American corporation find their resolution and the brave new workplace begin to reflect the aspirations of all Americans. □

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Samuel Hux

Economese — or the Misplaced Nominative

Mainstream capitalist economics has become, among other things, a *language*. I do not mean simply that economists employ a professional jargon. How could they not? Between Economese and ordinary English there are more than differences of vocabulary; there are different relations between subject, verb, and object . . . and so on. New Yorkers and Carolinians, say, speak two dialects of the same language. A New Yorker says, "Give me a lift downtown, will you?" A Carolinian says, "Would you carry me downtown?" Both mean, "Might I enter your car and be conveyed downtown if you're going that way?" Should a mainstream economist wish a lift and make his wish known in Economese, he would have to say something like "Assuming I enter your car with your permission, and assuming the car is going downtown, it could drive us both."

The late Willmoore Kendall—star of academic podium, *National Review*, and Bellow fiction ("Mosby's Memoirs")—once wrote, "Given an appropriate public opinion, I see no reason why a free political system and a socialized economic system couldn't exist on one and the same piece of real estate." Kendall's reference to public opinion brings to mind John Stuart Mill:

> The distribution of wealth . . . depends on the laws and customs of society. The rules by which it is determined are what the opinions and feelings of the ruling portion of the community make them, and are different in different ages and countries, and might still be more different, if mankind so chose.

I don't mean to suggest that Kendall's confession was in any sense advocacy of the "socialized economic system" that I would prefer; it wasn't. Nor do I mean to suggest that Kendall was kindly disposed toward Mill's thought; he wasn't. I mean they both had *a* language . . . but not *the* language of economics.

Both had a language that put very much up front in the nominative position the reasoning human actor. They both realized, and their styles are alive with it, *the centrality of human choice*. But economics, when it speaks, has become something like *a human effort to avoid the fact of human agency*.

Since mainstream capitalist economics presumes to describe the economic life of the nation, and since we cannot avoid coloring the world we describe with the language we employ, I think the "art" of the economists deserves consideration.

KENNETH BURKE ONCE DISTINGUISHED the *comic* from the *humorous* by saying that in comedy the protagonist, before all ends well, is faced with a taxing situation that he meets by a heroic magnification of his efforts, while humor "takes up the slack between the momentousness of the situation and the feebleness of those in the situation by *dwarfing the situation*."

Occasionally, now, economists assure us that the economy will overcome its difficulties (inflation, unemployment, recession, what-have-you) by the native verve, flexibility, imagination inherent in the system. That's *comedy*. Occasionally, now, we are assured the economy will overcome its apparent difficulties because they are only temporary fluctuations and therefore, in the long run, exaggerated. That's *humor*. Most of us don't have Burke's razor mind and can't sustain the distinction. We can let it go that economics is broadly a *humorous-comic* discipline: essentially optimistic. A slight adjustment here and there of a fiscal or a monetarist nature may be advisable upon occasion, but, overall, if just allowed to work, the economy will work by itself.

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But economists have generally had a hard time consistently sustaining the *comic vision*, knowing that some audiences will find little that's humorous about their deflated real incomes and such. So there is the temptation to change the tone upon selective occasion. Such as:

- This world has its intractibilities; we are only to a degree the masters of our fate. In the economic sphere, for instance, there are certain cycles that will run their courses, and there isn't a great deal we can do about this beyond patience and the most modest and cautious adjustments.
- Life is hard; that's the way things are. We should not panic and listen to those who think life simple, those who do not grasp the tenuousness of the human condition, who think the world subject to their ideological engineering, who would only—while tampering endlessly—destroy what order we can have, who do not understand, as Joseph de Maistre long ago put it, that "imperfection is an element of the perfection possible." . . .

The *tragic* voice. One would probably not be well advised to use it before upbeat Kiwanis audiences, but it goes well in certain sophisticated journals. And there *is* something intellectually winning—suggestions of depth and resonance—in the representation of life, its economic cycles included, as a rumbling historical epic rarely subject to human control, frustrating to analytic pretension. What Bertrand Russell once said of Hegel seems applicable here:

> If you watch a bus approaching you during a bad London fog, you see first a vague blur of extra darkness, and you only gradually become aware of it as a vehicle with parts and passengers. According to Hegel, your first view as a vague blur is more correct than your later impression, which is inspired by the misleading impulses of the analytic intellect.

But the tragic voice that economists assume on occasion is actually a rather pale corruption of the word. Consider: absolutely the last thing you can say about the tragic is that it's some authority of experience to which one appeals to counsel a sort of sad and worldly resignation: what after all can we do given the Nature of Things? The Tragic Sense of Life has nothing to do with resignation, or even with the timid hope that Nature will upon inconsistent occasion smile. Rather, the Tragic Sense of Life is an impulse to build civilization, to construct institutions and values; and it is a recognition that such tasks are *urgent* because if humankind does not make that civilized labor, civilization will not exist.

The possessor of the tragic sense knows that humankind may fail in the effort. But, as in tragic literature itself, every failure is followed by a new resolve by the damaged survivors. (That's the Shakespearean rhythm.) The mood of tragic literature is not characterized by a "wise" superior knowingness justifying resignation, but by an energy felt to be necessary. And tragic thought is characterized by the same energy. Sam Johnson (I think) said, "Grief, sir, is a species of idleness."

Unless he is a masochist, or unless he is one of the totally and utterly spent and defeated—one of those you see on the streets every day while "the economy is healthy again"—a human being rarely "gives up" unless he thinks that giving up really exacts no painful cost. And thus the sad-oh-so-sad resignation is more often than not a mere coziness playing at wisdom. And hence I suspect, instead of a tragic sense, it's really a kind of puffed-up *humor*. Remember: dwarfing the situation; things aren't really all that bad.

ECONOMIC COMEDY appeals to two principles. Its first principle: leave things essentially alone and the mechanics of the market will see to it that, on balance, all works out. (It may not seem to work out when it works out, but that's because you're focusing on the bus's broken differential, or on a passenger choking from a malfunctioning exhaust system, not on the blur of which Bertrand Russell spoke.) Its protective principle, so to speak: if things do not work out when they ought to, that's because someone insufficiently appreciative of those market mechanisms is impatiently tampering. (*You* broke that differential and strangled that passenger!)

Let us pursue the comedy, and further observe how it slowly breaks down as the corrupted tragic voice slowly takes over. Consider for instance one of the economy's claimed glories, *competition*, and one of its admitted problems, *inflation*. (Admission not universal: to some, inflation that isn't double-digit isn't inflation.)

(1) The classic theory of competition derives, of course, from Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. Supply exceeding demand: prices down. Demand exceeding supply: prices up. Supply equaling demand: prices at "natural" level. The agency that mediates between suppliers, keeping prices from soaring: competition. Competition, then, is what keeps prices stable so that more consumers can consume what more suppliers can supply so that everyone gets a just something. The motive power here is a Nature of Things forcing its happy intentions, the Invisible Hand of the Market. Economic Nature abhors inflation so much that, working its will, it will not allow inflation more than a sporadic appearance: it will crush the black-caped, musta-

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chioed, villainous producer-supplier who flouts its laws.

If this seems not to describe our experience, that's because the competition economists talk about is rarely now the competition capitalists know about. Underselling one's competitors to a degree consonant with returns above overhead may occur occasionally—rivalry of neighborhood groceries, a local gas-station war. But less and less now in the corporate world does competition have much to do with prices lowered. More and more it means competing through advertising to make one's product more "attractive," or even oneself more attractive ("We are the company that cares"). And there are sufficient instances on record of corporations *raising* prices because "competitors" have.

(2) Economic Nature abhors inflation, will not countenance those who practice inflationary measures. But, on the other hand, inflation has come by now to seem to most of us almost natural, in the sense that the familiar seems after a while to be Nature. It's unfortunate for the wage-earner/consumer that it does, for this provides a certain convenience to anyone who wishes to ask, rhetorically, "How can one be responsible for what's natural?" And the capitalist who has just raised his prices to the level of his rival's will appreciate that.

Evidently then—as one looks for *some* consistency—the inflation that's always abhorrent to Nature and its true servants must be of a very particular kind. For instance, if a corporation raises prices because it thinks (yum-yum) that it's a good idea to raise prices, and thereby an inflationary spiral is set off, that's OK—in some way Nature approves. But if that corporation raises prices specifically to offset *wage* increases, or to take advantage of other widely distributed income gains, and thereby an inflationary spiral is set off, then the inflation is not the fault of the corporation but the fault of those who got the wage hikes and the widely distributed income gains. And that's not OK; it's abhorrent. But, strange and stupefying to say, this sort of inflation, which is abhorrent to Nature, is caused by Nature! Consider:

Although increased general wealth is a good, and one of the things our economy is supposed to be particularly good at, it's inflationary. When there's more money in people's pockets and bank accounts because of wage-hikes or lower interest rates or what-have-you, then people tend to consume more goods, and so prices rise . . . or prices have a tendency to rise . . . or prices naturally rise. It is made to sound as if nobody does it—Nature does it.

Common sense (built into ordinary language) tells one that if there's more money around, then people who have things to make and things to sell to sellers want more of that money themselves. So they raise prices. But, in sophisticated discussion of the market, we are told: "Prices rise." The same way one might say with absolute assurance of no human agency: "Rain falls." Consequently, into our economic lives, we are told ever so sadly, some rain must fall.

I have observed, both here and in London, buses. I even drove one for a while in the army. And although the army is, for the most part, outside the free economy, I think certain principles are consistent. Actual people gas up, board, start up, navigate, and drive to some agreed-upon destination. To pretend there is no driver is either stupid or too clever by far. □

Harvey Klehr

The Case of the Legless Veteran

It is now 37 years ago that the United States government decided James Kutcher was a security risk because of his membership in the Trotskyist Socialist Workers party, then on the Attorney-General's list of subversive organizations. He was fired from his job as a clerk in the Vocational and Rehabilitation Division of the Veterans' Administration in Newark, New Jersey, in 1948.

Kutcher no doubt would have remained an obscure victim of a security-conscious government except for one fact. He had lost both his legs in September 1943 when hit by a mortar shell in Italy. That the government would attack a legless veteran made Kutcher a minor celebrity and helped to generate support that ordinarily was not accorded radicals under attack. His case was fought in the courts for a decade; among his lawyers was Joseph Rauh. Kutcher got his job back in 1956; two years later he won back pay. The system of "capitalist justice," which Kutcher and his party so despised, had finally protected his rights, albeit after a protracted struggle and such sensitive actions as trying to cut off his disability pension one week before Christmas in 1955.

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Prior to his case, Kutcher was an obscure member of the SWP. By his own admission, he had "no special talents" and did little more than "Jimmy Higgins" work for the party. The campaign on his behalf made him one of the most well-known Trotskyists in the country—a minimal distinction, to be sure, but one the SWP appreciated. Kutcher spoke widely around the country, and the party harped on his case; he wrote a book about his ordeal, and there was even a movie produced about it in 1981. Still, Kutcher remained a devoted rank-and-filer. He had joined the SWP in 1938 at the age of 25; it had been the one great commitment of his life.

IN 1983 KUTCHER WAS EXPELLED from the SWP, after 45 years of devoted service. That in itself is unremarkable; radical movements have a savage history of turning on old comrades for various ideological errors, and longevity in the ranks is rarely allowed to override other virtues. Still, the story of Kutcher's expulsion is fascinating, both for what it tells us of the ethics of at least one radical group, and the ironic counterpoint it provides to Kutcher's treatment at the hands of the U.S. government years ago.

The Socialist Workers party has been in turmoil for the past several years. Hundreds of members have either resigned or been expelled, including a large proportion of the party's veterans whose tenure goes back to the 1930s.

The immediate cause of the dispute was the decision of the party leadership, particularly of General Secretary Jack Barnes, to jettison several core Trotskyist ideas, including the concept of permanent revolution. Barnes has condemned most of the world's Trotskyists as hopeless sectarians and indicated that a new international grouping of communists is in the making, to be led by the Cubans and the Sandinistas. Abandoning their traditional critique of Stalinist regimes as betrayers of revolution, the SWP has accepted Cuban leadership of the world revolutionary movement. Since the Cubans are, in turn, devoted clients of the Soviet Union, the SWP has become more pro-Soviet, even going so far as to mute its traditional defense of Soviet dissidents.

Kutcher was one of the many SWPers who were unhappy about the new course. In 1981 he abstained in the voting for the leadership's resolutions at the party convention. Nonetheless, he has resolutely maintained that he was not disruptive and did not violate any organizational rules or resolutions, even those he opposed. This point is important because the SWP, despite its name, is a bolshevik organization that operates according to the rules of democratic centralism. There is supposed to be complete freedom within the party for discussion of all issues, but once a decision is made members are obligated to obey it.

The SWP has an elaborate and rather restrictive set of organizational norms. Discussion of the party's program is prohibited except for a three-month period prior to the party convention. Factions are prohibited. "Tendencies" are allowed to operate under the supervision of the party leadership, thus giving it the right to oversee the deliberations of any dissenters. Members are prohibited from discussing internal party matters with nonmembers.

KUTCHER WAS NOT expelled for running afoul of any guidelines. He was framed on a different charge.

On August 14, 1983, the New York–New Jersey district membership met to hear reports on recent developments in the SWP. Four members of the National Committee had just been suspended as a result of inner-party turmoil. The National Convention, required to be held every year, had been postponed for a year, meaning that intraparty discussion of the abandonment of basic tenets of Trotskyism had not been able to take place. Expecting trouble from critical members, the party leadership appointed Dick McBride, a National Committee member, to act as a security guard at the meeting. According to McBride, during the discussion he saw Kutcher, seated in his wheelchair at the back of the hall, punch Berta Langston, another party member, with no provocation. Fearing an escalation of the conflict, McBride did not intervene and Langston moved away. One week later, McBride filed charges against Kutcher for committing violence against a comrade.

Kutcher was devastated. All that had happened, he protested to his branch organizer, was that Langston had stood in front of his wheelchair, blocking his view of the speakers. He had touched her on the back "either with my right index finger or, possibly, with that and the middle finger." When she turned around, he had silently indicated that she should move and she had done so. Kutcher was shocked by this "nightmare." He "turned hot with anger, feeling under intolerable pressure, isolated, helpless, humiliated and in despair." He asked if a friend could come to the trial with him. The answer was no. He asked for a postponement of the party trial for a week or two to enable him to recover his equilibrium. The answer was no. "I had," he recalled, "the same feeling many years ago when the government was persecuting me, but at least some of the time the government witch-hunters pretended I had some rights."

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Three witnesses testified before the investigating committee—McBride, Langston, and George Breitman, a long-time SWP leader and friend of Kutcher's who gave Kutcher's version of the affair. McBride repeated his charges. Langston confirmed Kutcher's story in every detail, asserting that the charges were "completely baseless." Nevertheless, Kutcher's SWP branch concluded that McBride's version was correct, thus taking the word of a bystander over that of the two participants in the event. Because the severity of the violence was in doubt, Kutcher was only censured. Most of the report of the trial, however, charged that Kutcher had used violence and insulted women comrades in the past.

Kutcher, who had not been present, was particularly upset about the new charges, since he had not been informed of them prior to the trial. Despite their promises, SWP leaders refused to send Kutcher the trial transcript or allow him to see the report. Even though the branch members had heard the report the night of the trial—and Kutcher would also have heard it had he been well enough to attend—the party decided that he might circulate it outside the party and hence damage SWP security. In short, 35 years after the government labeled him a security risk, his SWP comrades agreed.

Emotionally distraught, Kutcher pleaded that he was unable to meet with an SWP delegation assigned to discuss his errors. On September 20 he was found guilty of violating party discipline for this infraction and instructed that he would be expelled if he did not meet the delegation by October 5. Kutcher wrote the party a plaintive letter, stating that he was not being defiant but had not attended the meeting because "I simply couldn't, physically or emotionally." He begged that his emotional turmoil be regarded as a legitimate excuse. He got no answer. When the deadline passed Kutcher was expelled. In April 1984 the National Convention rejected his appeal.

Despite his shabby treatment by the party to which he had devoted his life, Kutcher remained a true believer. "My loyalty to the party remains unchanged," he wrote in his appeal to the National Convention. He indicated that he did not want to be held responsible for any misuse of his case by enemies of the party. He now gives his allegiance to a Trotskyist splinter group, the Fourth Internationalist Tendency, composed of a few hundred people expelled from the SWP, including Breitman. Kutcher has been very ill, hospitalized for months because of his ailments. He may not live to realize his dream of being readmitted to the SWP.

IT SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE that Marxist-Leninist groups, which demand strict adherence to every detail of every regulation by private organizations or the government, evince no strong attachment to such procedure themselves. Luckily for Kutcher, his former comrades only have the power to expel him from their ranks. □

Israel Kugler

Anemia in Academe

In a 1980 landmark case, the U.S. Supreme Court, by a 5–4 decision, held that an independent association of faculty members at Yeshiva University in New York City, a private institution, was "managerial" and not entitled to the jurisdiction of the National Labor Relations Act (*NLRB* v. *Yeshiva*, 444 US 672). Five years later, this decision continues to produce a web of consequences that threaten to reach beyond the realm of higher education.

A group of Yeshiva faculty members, unhappy with their compensation and working conditions but perhaps too circumspect to affiliate with any of the national organizations involved in collective bargaining, petitioned the New York regional office of the National Labor Relations Board.

Despite the university administration's contention that the faculty members were managerial or supervisory, the NLRB upheld the faculty group's petition. A secret-ballot election was held and the faculty association won. The university's president and board of trustees refused to bargain and appealed to the Circuit Court of Appeals, to no avail. They then took the final step, appealing, successfully, to the U.S. Supreme Court—which struck down collective bargaining.

Since this decision, scores of cases have gone to administrative-law judges in various regional jurisdictions of the NLRB. The National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education reports that, in significant numbers and in substance, faculty efforts to seek collective-bargaining rights have been stymied, and earlier actions that had achieved bargaining status have been reversed. In some instances faculty representatives have given up bargaining rights and retained the nebulous right to "meet and confer."

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Even where collective bargaining is still in force, university administrations have effectively used the threat of implementing the doctrine of the *Yeshiva* decision to secure regressive agreements.

The majority of the Supreme Court held that a system of traditional "collegiality continue[s] to play a significant role at many universities, including Yeshiva." It claimed that this stemmed from the birth of the university in the High Middle Ages. In those nascent institutions, the faculty members formed guilds and not only assumed the obligations of teaching but also controlled tuition, books, admissions, buildings, and so on. That medieval faculty fought against any interference from the town, the crown, and the church. *Suspensorium clericorum*, a strike, was its extreme measure of self-defense. The U.S. Supreme Court majority correctly indicated that the "guilds of scholars were responsible only to themselves." Further, "at early universities, the faculty were the school." For, indeed, the distinction within the medieval university of administration versus teaching and research did not exist.

The scientific revolution with its knowledge explosion made for a new complexity in higher education, with the proliferation of disciplines and the establishment of increasingly sophisticated laboratories. This development, epitomized by the German *Universität* of the 19th century, was also reflected in American colleges and universities. The success and growth of business, however, impressed upon American institutions of higher education the hallmark of the corporation.

Again the Court majority admitted that "ultimate authority is vested in a Board of Trustees. . . . The president sits on the Board of Trustees and serves as chief executive officer. . . . " Further, it held that "University-wide policies are formulated by central administration with the approval of the Board of Trustees, and include general guidelines dealing with teaching loads, salary scales, tenure, sabbaticals, retirement, and fringe benefits." Thus it was admitted that it is the format of the corporation that determines present-day conditions under which teaching and research take place.

The personnel and curricular aspects of the university soon became so monumental that the administration alone couldn't handle them. The faculty was called upon, through a cluster of committees, to make recommendations in their scholastic areas to the administration. Indeed, participation in these committees was expected of faculty members who sought tenure and advancement in rank. But effective final decisions remained firmly in the orbit of the administration.

THE SPECTACULAR SUCCESS of collective bargaining in the public schools and, beginning in the 1960s, in the public colleges and universities had its effect on private institutions.

To be sure, union locals had already been organized on many campuses in the 1930s, including Ivy League schools, but these were campus protest organizations directed at the problems spawned by the Great Depression. Collective bargaining was not envisioned by these early units of the American Federation of Teachers. Earlier, the conforming, repressive atmosphere during the First World War caused the organizing of the American Association of University Professors. Its aim was to safeguard academic freedom—but negotiation over such matters as salaries and workload was not on the AAUP's agenda.

The NLRB's assumption of jurisdiction over private colleges and universities paralleled a development in the public sector: the legitimization of collective bargaining through statute law. Now obeisance based upon fear was replaced by a process of negotiation approaching a level of equality.

The process of collective bargaining and the steps leading to it are based on a series of basic civil rights. These include the rights of petition, of secret-ballot election, of mandating collective bargaining in good faith—and of the adjudication of employees' grievances by outside and binding arbitration. Upholding these rights amounts, to a significant extent, to democracy in the workplace.

Faculty members, whether for or against unionism and collective bargaining, should be conscious of the grave distinction between "no bargaining" as a result of *free democratic choice* in an electoral process, and "no bargaining" because of a false claim that they have managerial status, which *precludes a free democratic choice* under the procedures of the National Labor Relations Act.

Under the doctrine of the *Yeshiva* decision, input and recommendation in decision-making have become transmogrified into decision-making itself. The yardstick employed by administrative-law judges is the statistical congruence between recommendations by faculty and decisions by administration. But a faculty's quests for collective bargaining arise from the reality of grave differences with an administration. One surely can imagine how far a "managerial" faculty would get if it voted itself substantial salary increases and reductions in workload!

After over a decade of steady increase of collective bargaining in private institutions of higher learning, the *Yeshiva* decision continues to bleed away the vitality of that movement. These days of

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severe competition for students and cutbacks in student and institutional financial aid would seem to be propitious for collective bargaining, but the Yeshiva decision bars that approach.

THE IMPLICATIONS of the *Yeshiva* decision go far beyond academe. Obviously, this doctrine can be applied to the public colleges and universities.

The drive for worker representation on corporation boards, worker participation in production decisions, and in profit-sharing schemes could lead to the demagogic claim that labor is management and thus unions are superfluous.

Certainly, this kind of thinking could apply to unionized symphony orchestras as well, where applicants must pass muster by an audition jury of unionized musicians—and to the building and machine trades, where journeymen train and evaluate apprentices.

The strategy of the national organizations involved in higher-education bargaining has been to employ a case-by-case approach to make an end run around the *Yeshiva* decision. One such development involving Cooper Union in New York City, hailed as a "victory" by the union, is instructive. After having won an election in October 1973 and gaining certification as bargaining agent in 1974, the AFT union faced an administration that withdrew recognition in 1980—based on the *Yeshiva* decision. In March 1985 the union, after appealing a negative decision by the administrative-law judge to the full NLRB, received a ruling in its favor. The union had to document its case by showing that the faculty was a numerical minority on key college committees. The college administration has been ordered to bargain but is prepared to resist, and the union has been compelled to go to the Circuit Court. If the union is upheld, the Cooper Union administration will probably go to the U.S. Supreme Court. The final outcome may take months, possibly years. Now 13 years have elapsed since the union gained original recognition.

So far, the climate for extension and renewal of bargaining rights remains to be developed. In the 1984 session of the Congress, William L. Clay introduced a bill (HR 3291) that specifically states:

> . . . that no faculty member or group of faculty members shall be deemed managerial or supervisory solely because [a] faculty member or group of faculty members participate in decisions with respect to courses, curriculums, personnel, budget or other matters of educational policy.

Whether sufficient faculty will become involved in lobbying for the Clay bill remains to be seen. And without a legal imprimatur to reverse *Yeshiva*, the outlook will remain dismal.

At Boston University its president, John Silber, fought the AAUP chapter to a standstill. His philosophy is that collective bargaining is part of American culture but has no place in a college or university of quality. Faculty should participate in decisions, but the president makes the decision.

SOMETIMES IT TAKES A GROTESQUERIE to illuminate the reality of campus power relations. Last year, on April Fool's Day, an extensive news story (*New York Times*, April 1, 1985) appeared about New York State's 50-year-old Hofstra University. This institution expanded right after the Second World War through a subsidy via the GI Bill of Rights. In more recent years, with little endowment, a decline of undergraduate enrollment, and a deficit of $6.5 million, Hofstra had been in poor shape. When a new president was to be selected, two business-oriented trustees circumvented the officially, appointed search committee and secretly met with their candidate—a businessman-politician. After his selection, Hofstra represented a "case study of how tough business practices turned around a college—and the trade-offs that go with such an approach."

These "tough business practices" included: the hiring of a high-powered, expensive public-relations representative; enlisting celebrities to act as sponsors for conferences; helicoptering conference participants to the campus; rewarding only those faculty members who were able to attract large numbers of students to their courses. According to this article, the Fine Arts Department got the message and handed out A and B grades 88 percent of the time. The average faculty salary is $3,000 less than that at a neighboring public two-year community college. High-powered recruiters descended on high schools along the East Coast emphasizing the fact that Hofstra possesses the only olympic-size indoor pool among New York area colleges. A faculty survey revealed that there was more emphasis on "profit motive than excellence." In this bizarre institution, too, the unhappy faculty was precluded from asserting its professional concerns because of the *Yeshiva* decision and had to resort to a strike.

NOW, 50 YEARS AFTER the passage of the National Labor Relations Act, the *Yeshiva* decision of the Supreme Court is an important example of the progressive weakening of those basic human rights embodied in New Deal labor legislation. □

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Charles Molesworth

Rambo, Passion, and Power

This is more than just another movie. In the first few weeks after it opened, it became the third biggest money grosser in Hollywood history, and may eventually top the list. *Time* magazine soon reported on the "spin-offs" it generated, down to models of the bow and arrows tipped with grenades that Rambo uses—too late alas for Father's Day, but probably a sure profit item. The movie and its simplistically effective hero have also been invoked repeatedly in the halls of Congress.

Some deep social and political longings have been touched, sociologists tell us, when a popular movie provokes such wide responses. Social anthropologists speak of modern "myths," and it becomes increasingly hard to avoid using mystificating schemes if one seeks to explain the feelings audiences testify to in discussing why this movie grips them. Lionel Tiger, one such anthropologist, has spoken on a television show of how contradictory it all is. After all, he said, we are not at war with the people portrayed in the movie as our enemy, in fact we are seeking to establish trade agreements with them.

Rambo is clearly a movie about power, the power of nations and the power of individuals. There are two nations involved, of course, but three sorts of individuals. America and Vietnam are contrasted in the movie as the good nation and the evil one. When it comes to individuals, however, a simple good-and-evil classification doesn't work so easily. There are clearly evil men in the service of an evil country, these being the Vietnamese captors. There are clearly good men in the service of a good country, namely Rambo and the American servicemen he is sent to rescue.

But there are also evil men in the (apparent) service of a good country: the bureaucrats and military men who enlist Rambo and then set him up for betrayal. These individuals allow the simplistic good-and-evil morality of the movie to generate some dramatic tension and plot suspense. Such complications and suspense as the movie offers are indeed rudimentary, but they are also what gives the movie its impact. It won't do to see the movie as simply racist (which it undoubtedly is), or fixated on revenge through violent and oddly narcissistic self-assertion (which it also undoubtedly is). The movie is about people like Rambo who love their country beyond all else and because it fulfills their self-image to be so patriotic, and those other people who simply cannot understand patriotism, its depth, and its transforming power. The movie says something essentially revolutionary but its revolution is in the direction of fascism: namely, that those who, in this case, love the country are not those who govern it, and vice versa.

THE MOVIE OFFERS a nice set of interlocking paradoxes. It presents the military intelligence, personified by the Murdoch character (played by Charles Napier), as both tough militarily and weak morally. On the other hand, Rambo possesses a moral vision that makes him physically imposing: the barbaric nature of his pose, the blank stupor of his facial expression and trite dialogue, the half-primitive nature of his weaponry are all expressions of a pure commitment to a good cause. Yet this physical strength, while most expressive, is unavailing against the technological superiority of the corrupt military intelligence. Only when Rambo is able to commandeer a helicopter for himself and outmaneuver a faster, more sophisticated gunship can he complete the mission. This divided attitude toward the relation between morality and weaponry is paralleled by a divided attitude toward politicians and bureaucrats.

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The movie echoes the simplistic macho attitudes of such national leaders as Reagan, Weinberger, and Kirkpatrick—while at the same time it says that leaders are weak and self-serving. In this sense, the movie's audience plainly ought to see that Reagan's response to, say, the Shiite hijacking of TWA flight # 847 is just another instance of someone who presents a tough face but is unable to take a truly effective military reprisal. And while the polls may show that Reagan's approval rating drops because of his ineffective response to such terrorists, the belief will persist that he is the best choice to negotiate a tough arms-control treaty with the Russians and to prevent the spread of communism in Central America. This set of paradoxes can be spelled out as the belief that moral sternness is greater than weaponry and technological expertise, even if the latter two forces occasionally have the upper hand.

Rambo also has his contradictions. At the end of the mission he grabs a machine gun and a belt of cartridges and goes off, obviously to hunt down the traitorous Murdoch. On the way, Rambo pauses to blast away at the bank of computers and radar screens that fill the command post and make it look like a corporate banking office. Like the Luddites who responded to the advent of technology by breaking machines, Rambo epitomizes reactionary attitudes that stand for a "purer" vision. But it's when he finally meets up with Murdoch that the movie's tensions escape their paradoxical containment and become simply contradictory. Rambo grabs Murdoch, slams his head to the desk, plunges his oversized knife into the wood next to his ear, and says, with brutally simplistic irony, "Mission accomplished, sir." This action contradicts the latter half of the movie, whose theme has become a tag line: when Murdoch lyingly promises to come to rescue Rambo, Rambo counters by growling, "I'm coming to get *you*!"

WHAT STARTS AS A REVENGE MOVIE directed against Vietnamese has turned into a vengeful hunt for the betraying bureaucrats. Rambo satisfies the first part of the revenge plot by single-handedly killing off a hundred or so of his pursuers, destroying the entire prison camp, and rescuing all the American prisoners. The movie makes no mistake about who the real enemies are, and the audience that I saw the movie with bristled with excitement when Rambo landed his damaged helicopter and immediately stalked off, with a murderous glint in his eyes, in the direction of Murdoch's command center. The paradox might be said to be resolved when Rambo destroys the computer terminal rather than Murdoch. Apparently it is the system of bureaucratic, computerized control (presented as evil and ineffective at the beginning of the movie) that is ultimately responsible for our failure in the jungle of Southeast Asia.

This theme is further developed when Rambo is symbolically reborn after his pursuers kill his love interest, a Vietnamese woman who is described as a loyal "indigenous contact" who saves Rambo from a particularly gruesome torture session. As a medieval knight would do, Rambo takes a "favor" from the dead lady (a strip of her dress she used to bandage his hand) and makes a headband for himself and puts on her jade talisman as well. From then on, his killing prowess is awesome in the implausible extreme; he rises out of the river and emerges from a mud bank to strike with deadly accuracy. He has become the earth itself, master of the jungle, the same environment that was, by all popular belief, the main source of America's defeat in the real war in Vietnam. Like the white man turned trailblazer who out-stalked and outprimitivized the Indian in those movie westerns of three and four decades ago, Rambo is more skillful than the indigenous Asian population that is tracking him. This skill is part and parcel of Rambo's preindustrial moral goodness, and one character even goes so far as to say that for most Americans the Asian jungle is hell, but for Rambo it's home.

Earlier I said there were two countries involved in the movie. That oversimplifies things somewhat, since there are Americans, Vietnamese, and Russians. The Vietnamese are pictured, however, as nothing but the unwitting pawns of the Russians, who in their turn are shown to be copies of the movie-style Nazis of the late '40s and early '50s. Indeed, the Vietnamese are shown, not as the masters of guerrilla warfare and jungle survival that they were in fact, but as slow-witted victims of money, whisky, and whores. They are the Indians of the Hollywood westerns, of course, and the Russians are the unscrupulous traders who sell them ammunition out of sheer venality.

The paradoxes at the movie's center extend even to the theme of race. Since Rambo's life is saved by a Vietnamese woman and he even pledges to take her back to America (just a moment before the enemy cuts her down and provokes our hero's rebirth), the movie apparently clears itself of any charge of egregious racism. So the movie's demonology runs something like this, going from minor devils to major ones: there are the crude but innocent Vietnamese captors, the implacably inhuman Russians, the craven and empty Murdoch and the bureaucracy behind him, and the instruments

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of control and observation that make all the deception possible and (putatively) antiseptic. Each demon is progressively more powerful, more removed from the jungle and its savage beauty, more out of touch with simple emotions like love and patriotism.

By relying on movie stereotypes drawn from westerns and World War II anti-Nazi movies, *Rambo* deals with a simple cinematic vocabulary. It does little to update this vocabulary, and adds only the theme of a Luddite distrust of computerization and bureaucracy. It uses the chase and the betrayal-and-revenge structures to give the audience a visceral approach to its themes. But underneath it all is a belief in power, specifically a moral power that is capable of outstripping technology and corruption. This is the power many Americans apparently want to believe in, a power that doesn't ask questions about imperialism or world markets, about other people's nationalistic aspirations, about a capacity for self-delusion. On the contrary, this power is absolutely sure of itself, comes equipped with only the simplest tools (though it is capable of mastering others at will), and it recognizes only two sorts of people—incorrigible victimizers and victims destined eventually to take revenge. The movie in this sense is the perfect emotional emblem for Reaganism, since it mimics the combination of moral simplicity and a mistrust of modernization, with its overtones of secularism and rationality, which lies near the center of Reagan's popular support. (Even Reagan's Star Wars can be seen as the paradoxical epitome of this sentiment, for it is his main contribution to modern images of warfare: a technology that renders all other technology null and void.) Finally, it is America's way of believing in the efficiency of its own power, without having to face the awesome destructiveness of that power. Put slightly differently, it allows Americans to know that if a simple man controls the tools, they will always be used correctly.

One line struck me as the final credits rolled on the screen. "To Crédit Lyonnais, who made it all possible" went the line, and the hand of international entrepreneurial capitalism was finally, though barely, visible. Such an acknowledgment finally overshadows any formulation about the movie's mythic power, or perhaps in some way it inadvertently reveals it. For the power behind those computers and radar screens that Rambo shatters with his bullets is virtually invisible, controlled as it is by those who have designed the "information" society. *Rambo* almost identifies this power—the power of control and observation—as the true source of villainy. But it's not Murdoch who planned the war or prosecuted it; as he says, "I'm just here to clear up the mess." Like many another of today's bureaucrats, he is engaged in "crisis management." We need to see a movie about how the crisis gets started in the first place, a movie that makes corrupt power—especially the power to decide what is subject to control and observation—fully visible. □

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Jeff Faux

Bailouts and Community

NEW DEALS: THE CHRYSLER REVIVAL AND THE AMERICAN SYSTEM, by Robert Reich and John Donahue. New York: Times Books. 359 pp. $17.95.

"Dodge Main"—the name of the huge Chrysler plant in Hamtramck—was often the first English phrase learned by Poles arriving in Detroit. Over half a century it produced 14 million cars and helped integrate into mainstream society successive waves of immigrants from Europe and the American South. In 1978 the factory supported 5,000 workers, their families, and the small businesses that served them.

That same year Lee Iacocca took over as president of the Chrysler Corporation. By 1984 the company had closed Dodge Main and 17 other plants. Blue-collar employment at the company dropped from 105,000 to about 60,000. It is a measure of the meager expectations Americans have of their leaders that Iacocca has become a folk hero.

Mercifully, Lee Iacocca is not the subject of Robert Reich and John Donahue's valuable book. In fact, I was surprised at how small a role he gets to play in their version—which will probably be the definitive one—of the Chrysler bailout. The authors are on to a larger theme. Like biologists examining a specimen for clues of the evolutionary process, Reich and Donahue have dissected the Chrysler bailout for insights into the metamorphosis of American capitalism. Their report is intelligently written, often fascinating, and full of useful observations about the evolving government-business nexus in a modern economy.

The book is also an example of how the examination of institutions can produce understanding of the real world that escapes the abstract quantifications of most current economic studies. Institutional analysis is the neglected stepchild of the economics profession and its appearance in competent dress at any time should be applauded.

THE CHRYSLER BAILOUT, as Reich and Donahue recount, was but one of a series of recent direct interventions by the federal government to save big companies from failure. These "New Deals" date from the Penn Central and Lockheed bailouts under Nixon and Ford in the early '70s and continue up to the rescue of Harley-Davidson and Continental-Illinois by the "free marketeers" now occupying the White House. The rationalizations vary but by and large the motivation is the same; when big companies go down the financial tubes they tend to take lots of voters and campaign contributors with them.

Reich and Donahue do not think it inappropriate that government should help out people and communities in trouble. After all, in a decent society, human values ought to be at least as important a basis for public policy as supply-and-demand curves. What occupies the authors here is the question of whether these *neo*-New Deals are the best way to do it.

According to the authors, Chrysler's problems lay primarily in a combination of mismanagement, outmoded labor agreements, and the shock of Japanese competition and the high interest rates that hit the economy in the 1970s. It seems that Chrysler had been successfully mismanaged since the early '50s, when Ford overtook it as the second largest American car-maker. Lackluster styling, poorly timed expansion, and some bad luck plagued the company even when the U.S. auto industry was booming. Company management was even slower

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to react to the energy crisis than competitors' executives, wasting time and resources fighting government regulations while the Japanese were making smaller, more efficient cars. When it became apparent, in the late '70s, that the days of American manufacturing hegemony were over, Chrysler was out of gas.

Chrysler's bankers, led by Manufacturers Hanover Trust, scarcely managed any better. After years of pouring their depositors' money into the company with little effort to find out what was going on, suddenly they got cold feet and wanted their money back. Incredibly, many of the smaller banks in the multibank syndicate had agreed to enormous lines of credit on the assumption that they'd never be used. When the company started to draw the money, the bankers were flabbergasted. Said one: "What? You mean lend Chrysler money? A loan? We thought it was just a line of credit."

In late 1978 a Chrysler executive walked into the Indiana branch of the U.S. Farmers Home Administration and asked the government to guarantee $250 million in bank loans for a new transaxle plant in the town of Richmond. Therewith began a two-and-a-half-year saga of financial and political wheeling and dealing that absorbs the bulk of the book. The negotiations involved hundreds of banks, state and local governments, and union locals in a huge interlocking puzzle where the pieces kept trying to wriggle out of place. Time and time again it looked like the arrangement would fly apart when some last-minute concession was wrung out of a weary participant. When all the deals were cut, the government provided $1.5 billion in guarantees and for three years was the company's de facto board of directors.

BY MARKETPLACE STANDARDS, this exercise in corporate socialism was no lemon. In 1982 Chrysler was in the black, and in 1984 profits reached almost $2.5 billion.

Popular mythology attributes the recovery to Iacocca's genius. However, while acknowledging Iacocca's flair for marketing, Reich and Donahue point out that the products and basic strategy that pulled out Chrysler were designed by his immediate predecessor, John Riccardo, who was forced to resign early in the game to satisfy a congressional demand for sacrificial blood.

• *The real key to success,* however, was the federal government's insistence that all the parties involved—managers, workers, creditors, local governments, shareholders, and suppliers—be required to make concessions. This in itself was a major departure from past precedents, in which the government had typically saved the corporation free of charge.

It is an article of faith in economic-policy circles that government assistance is inevitably inefficient because, unlike the private sector, the government has no capacity to say no. But the experience of the Chrysler bailout was just the opposite. The Treasury Department officials—particularly a civil servant named Brian Freeman and then the secretary, G. William Miller—played hardball, rejecting overoptimistic business projections, demanding cutbacks, and forcing concessions including a demand that every single creditor involved sign on to the complex agreement.

Another cliché of our political culture is that government involvement in private enterprise leads to political interference with tough business decisions. But the government's Loan Guarantee Board, which was set up to monitor the deal, continued the hard line. Reich and Donahue report that "indeed, we learned of no instance when any elected official intervened with the loan board or its staff in order to limit the pain. This, too," they continue, "flies in the face of the conventional wisdom that governments cannot make or abide by tough decisions the burdens of which fall on identifiable groups."

The major complaint from Iacocca, by the way, was not about the government's insistence that payrolls be pared and plants be closed, but about its demand that Chrysler executives give up their fleet of private jets!

• *From the standpoint of social policy,* the deal seems less successful. Labor, the constituency in whose name the bailout took place, suffered most through layoffs and cuts in wages and benefits. In dollar terms, labor made more concessions than any other party involved, including the shareholders whose function it was to bear the risk. And when the turnabout did come, say Reich and Donahue, "It was not the blue-collar employees but stockholders, managers, lenders, consultants, lawyers and lobbyists—all relatively wealthy—who benefited most from the bailout. Chrysler workers as a whole fared poorly compared to these groups."

• *Here is the irony:* pressure to save jobs for the United Auto Workers and the cities and states where Chrysler facilities were located triggered the rescue effort; but the maintenance of employment soon became hostage to the less rational objective of saving the corporate entity. The Chrysler bailout became a *financial* deal, and the measure of success was a financially profitable company. Saving the company was the proxy for saving the jobs. And in order to save the company . . . well, as Reich and

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Donahue put it: "When the crunch came, something had to give. Nearly every other claim on Chrysler, including wage levels and the government's stake, was fixed and defended by contract, covenant, or law. What gave was jobs."

The authors came away convinced that most of the actors defended the interests of their constituencies as best they could. Indeed, the legal, financial, and ideological environment in which they acted posed the false choice of whether or not Chrysler should be saved—rather than whether and how to preserve an economically hard-hit work force and its communities.

THE CHRYSLER BAILOUT, argue Reich and Donahue, reflected a national penchant for "programmed serendipity"—the determination of policy-makers to avoid the ideological discomfort involved in using the most straightforward means of carrying out public interventions in the private market. One example is the use of "national defense" to justify everything from a highway program enacted for the benefit of the auto and construction industries to aid to education. Saving Chrysler, they argue, was more ideologically and politically acceptable than saving jobs.

What was the alternative? "It is possible," the authors write, "to keep a firm in operation while stranding many of the people and communities that depend on it. It is equally possible to protect the status of people and communities without saving firms."

"Equally possible"? Here is the one place where the book falters. Given the powerful case they have made that the system itself forced a tragic narrowing of political objectives, their view seems too sanguine. Moreover, the book's own brief discussion of alternatives—job retraining, wage subsidies, encouraging mergers—does not inspire much confidence. Reich and Donahue complain that there is no political support for such efforts. One reason is that in the absence of a clear national commitment to stabilize employment at the community level, these efforts are unlikely to work. If I had been working at a Chrysler plant, I would also have identified more with a surviving corporation than with a government training program.

• *What is needed* is a strategy for severing industrial mobility—the inevitable rise and decline of any industry in a competitive, dynamic world—from geographic mobility. Must a shrinking auto industry necessarily mean a shrinking Detroit? If not, what kind of national and local planning is required to preserve the economic base of our communities? And how much ideological discomfort are politicians willing to bear, and are we willing to force them to bear, in order to do so? Dodge Main may have been hopelessly obsolete, but it should clearly be within our capacity to find useful work in Detroit for the people there who depended on it.

These are not just issues of economic policy. I believe, and I suspect that Reich and Donahue might too, that the alternative to both Republican and Democratic versions of marketplace individualism must be built on an idea of *community*. If this assumption is correct, we will remain in the political wilderness until we define a viable and practical economic strategy that allows people to put down permanent roots and nurtures the social institutions that bind us to each other where we live and work.

Given everyone else's track record, it is of course not much of a criticism that the authors of *New Deals* have failed to solve the tension between human values and the marketplace. By and large, this is a first-rate job. In addition to its other virtues, the book is a timely reminder that, despite the current national obsession with free-market ideology, underlying economic pressures are continuing to force, for better or worse, a more explicit fusion of public and private sectors. □

Sharif Arani

Waiting in Iran

SHAH OF SHAHS, by Ryszard Kapuściński. Translated from the Polish by William R. Brand and Katarzyna Mroczkowska-Brand. San Diego and New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. A Helen and Kurt Wolff Book. 152 pp. $12.95.

In this short and very readable book Ryszard Kapuściński offers us lively, snapshot descriptions of scenes from the life and 37-year reign of the last King of Kings together with a dramaturgical perspective on the revolution that put an end to it. Beginning with a reporter's brief impressions of life

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in Iran shortly after the revolution ("Cards, Faces, Fields of Flowers"), Kapuściński takes us through the life and troubled last years of the Shah ("Daguerreotypes") to return for a farewell glance at the somber postrevolution Iran of the Islamic committees ("The Dead Flame").

This is of course not a scholarly book about Iranian history or the late Shah. There are quite a few inaccuracies of historical detail. The references to the Shiite diaspora, pogroms, and to Shiites in ghettos and in catacombs are quite inaccurate. The Shah was wounded by a terrorist's bullets in 1949, but not "gravely." After his flight from Iran in August 1953, he stayed in Rome not a few "weeks" but days. He did not "throw himself body and soul into the game of trying to be the supreme I" upon his return from Rome but some ten years later. Khomeini's uprising in June 1963 did not go on "for five months" and Mossadegh's party did not play a leading role in it.

"Photograph 1," the first of the "Daguerreotypes," depicts a pathetic, simple soldier holding a chain with the assassin of Shah Naser al-Din in 1896 at its other end. The soldier is taken to be Shah Mohammad Reza's grandfather. As a matter of historical fact, the soldier cannot with any plausibility be identified with Pahlavi's grandfather who, to the best of our uncertain knowledge, was an obscure sergeant of the cavalry. In this instance Kapuściński is nevertheless reporting a historical reality of a different order, one pertaining to the popular mythology of the Iranian revolution. This rumor about the alleged ancestor of the upstart Pahlavi dynasty reminds one of a more colorful story circulating during Iran's earlier revolution, the constitutional revolution of 1906. The popular mythology of that revolution had it that the dagger with which the third Shiite Imam was killed in the year 680 was held by the then reigning House of Qajar.

The Shah called his last reform program "The Revolution of the Shah and the People." As Kapuściński's account makes clear, the decade of the 1970s did witness the revolution of the Shah and of the People, but in two distinct stages. The first consisted of the Shah's revolution, his attempt to use the petro-dollars to create a Great Civilization and make Iran one of the five most powerful nations. This attempt was the cause of major social dislocation as well as the emergence of a "petro-bourgeoisie" that "produces nothing, and unbridled consumption that makes up its whole occupation." The people did not actively participate in the Shah's revolution but began their own in 1978. Kapuściński sees the rejection of the civilization the Shah wished to transplant to Iran as the essence of the revolution.

THIS BRINGS US to the most interesting feature of the book: its dramaturgical perspective on the revolution in Iran. Kapuściński maintains, correctly I think, that books on revolution "should begin with a psychological chapter, one that shows how a harassed, terrified man suddenly breaks his terror, stops being afraid." This he does very well, emphasizing the spontaneity of this fundamental transformation. Then, with great verve, Kapuściński proceeds with the unfolding of the revolution as pure drama:

> The play takes place on several levels at the same time; many things are happening on stage. The scenery begins to move and light up, wheels turn, chimneys smoke, tanks roll back and forth, ministers kiss the Shah's hand, officials hurry after rewards, policemen frown, mullahs talk and talk, extras keep their mouths shut and work. There is more and more crowding and bustle. The Shah walks, beckoning here and pointing a finger there, always in the spotlight. Suddenly confusion breaks out on stage as if everyone had forgotten his part. Yes, they're throwing away the script and making up lines on their own. Revolt in the theater! The spectacle turns into something else, it becomes a violent, rapacious spectacle. . . .

And afterward? What follows the revolution as a spontaneous experience of freedom and "an adventure of the heart"? The closing pages deal with this "melancholy topic":

> Iran—it was the twenty-seventh revolution I have seen in the Third World. Amid the smoke and the roar, rulers would change, governments fall, new people take their seat. But one thing was invariable, indestructible, and—I dread saying it—eternal: the helplessness. These chambers of the Iranian committees reminded me of what I had seen in Bolivia, Mozambique, the Sudan, Benin. What should we do? Do you know what to do? . . .

What he sees in the chambers of the Islamic committees are unshaven, uneducated men assuming positions of power. A woman petitioner remaining motionless in the waiting room impresses him with the fantastic talent of the people in Iran for waiting. Overcome by depression, Kapuściński seeks solace in the store of a friendly merchant who shows him Persian carpets and reflects on their importance in relieving the tedium of daily life throughout millennia of Iranian history. □

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Maurice Isserman

Black Protest Movements

LAY BARE THE HEART: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, by James Farmer. New York: Arbor House. 370 pp. $16.95.

THE ORIGINS OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT: BLACK COMMUNITIES ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE, by Aldon D. Morris. New York: Free Press. 354 pp. $19.95.

The Montgomery bus boycott began in December 1955 when Rosa Parks, a black seamstress, was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a city bus to a white passenger. For a full year after her arrest blacks in Montgomery defied custom, law, and violent intimidation, and refused to ride in the segregated city buses. In the end they were victorious: Montgomery's bus system was desegregated and civil rights was on its way to the center of the nation's domestic concerns.

The first issue of *Dissent* to appear after the start of the bus boycott carried a report from Montgomery by Lawrence Reddick, a black historian at Alabama State College (soon to become one of the founders of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference). *Dissent*, which had not been the most cheerful magazine to read in its first few years, responded to the events in Montgomery with enthusiasm. "Suddenly," Reddick wrote, "Montgomery, Alabama, has become one of the world's most interesting cities.... [The bus boycotters] have given us a magnificent case study of the circumstances under which the philosophy of Thoreau and Gandhi can triumph." In the same issue Irving Howe predicted that in a few decades "the Montgomery action may be looked upon as a political and social innovation of a magnitude approaching the first sit-down strikes in the Akron rubber plants during the mid-'30s."

We now stand at a further remove from the events in Montgomery, and Greensboro, and even Birmingham, than *Dissent*'s writers stood in the mid-1950s from the events in Akron and Flint. The significance that Reddick and Howe attributed to the bus boycott was borne out by the subsequent history of the civil rights movement. And yet, these many years later, the origins of the Montgomery boycott and of the civil rights movement in general remain obscure. Martin Luther King's charismatic leadership and martyrdom have, in some accounts, reduced the rest of the civil rights movement to the role of supporting actors. But as King himself wrote of the boycott in *Stride Toward Freedom*, "This is not a drama with only one actor." Thanks to the recent publication of James Farmer's autobiography, *Lay Bare the Heart*, and Aldon D. Morris's scholarly study, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*, other actors have begun to emerge from the shadows.

JAMES FARMER'S *Lay Bare the Heart* is a first-hand account of the long, slow, frustrating process of building an effective movement. It is also a compelling personal narrative of growing up black and relatively privileged in a racist society. James Farmer was born in Texas in 1920, and was raised as a "PK"—a preacher's kid. That was a status he held in common with Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X. Black preachers' kids grew up knowing their fathers were exceptional men, honored in their own world—but they also had to learn that this prestige counted for very little outside the black community. Farmer never forgot the humiliation of watching his father, a powerful, distinguished, and learned man, abjectly sign over his paycheck to a couple of surly, shotgun-toting white farmers after having accidentally run over one of their pigs with his car. The PK's father was a model to be emulated—and rejected. "Even as a child," Farmer recalls, "I hated the lying, the dissembling, the subterfuge, the pretense...."

Farmer enrolled as a theology student at Howard University, but his involvement in the Methodist student movement and an interest in Gandhi led him to a job as race-relations secretary for the pacifist Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR). A few weeks after Pearl Harbor, when most of the country was preoccupied with mobilizing against the enemy abroad, the 21-year-old FOR secretary sat down and wrote a memo proposing a war against freedom's enemy at home, the Jim Crow system, which enforced de jure segregation in the South and de facto segregation in the North. Farmer argued that a small, disciplined group of activists, trained in the spirit and tactics of nonviolent civil disobedience, could spark a mass movement against racial discrimination. His memo, and some successful experiments in using direct-action tactics against segregated eating places in Chicago, led to the formation of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) later that year.

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In the 1940s CORE was an insignificant subcommittee of a marginal movement. But it possessed enormous élan, sustained by its members' youthful enthusiasm and some early victories over segregated facilities in Northern cities. In 1947 CORE made its first serious foray into the South with the "Journey of Reconciliation." Sixteen participants, half of them black, half white, rode on interstate bus systems in Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky, and deliberately sat in the "wrong" seats. When confronted by irate drivers, policemen, and passengers, they quoted the Supreme Court's recent Irene Morgan decision declaring segregation of interstate passengers on motor carriers unconstitutional. But what the Supreme Court had to say about civil rights did not carry much weight with white Southerners in 1947, and 12 of the participants were arrested. Notwithstanding this hostile reception, CORE activists saw the Journey as a successful skirmish in a national campaign against segregation.

Plans to continue and broaden the protest had to be put aside. The late 1940s and early '50s were, to say the least, not hospitable times for civil disobedience. (As Aldon Morris notes, even the cautious, legalistic National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was crippled in the South in the 1950s; using techniques recently perfected in the suppression of the Communist party, a number of Southern states made it illegal for teachers and state employees to belong to the NAACP. In Alabama the organization was completely outlawed.)

CORE made no inroads in the South in the early 1950s, and it barely survived in the North. I found Farmer's description of these lean years the most interesting part of his book. CORE scraped by through the self-sacrifice of a few stalwart members, while Farmer supported himself with a series of union and movement jobs too small for his talents as a political leader. This part of the book is as much a history of the left as of the civil rights movement. Farmer spent four years in the early 1950s as field secretary of a minuscule campus group called the Student League for Industrial Democracy—a group that would achieve greater recognition when it was reincarnated in the early 1960s as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). There were no dramatic episodes in Farmer's life in this period, just the endless, dreary task of keeping certain organizations, ideas, and traditions alive, a variety of heroism too little appreciated.

With the upsurge of civil rights activity in the late 1950s, CORE and Farmer came into their own. (Farmer's first reaction to the news from Montgomery was not one of unalloyed joy. "The nonviolent movement in America is airborne," he recalled thinking. "Why am I not more exuberant? Is it because it is not I who leads it?" Being a Preacher's Kid didn't make him a saint, as he is the first to acknowledge.)

In 1961 Farmer became CORE's national director, a post he would hold for the next five years. CORE's sponsorship of the "Freedom Rides" in the summer of 1961 made it one of the four leading civil rights organizations in the nation and Farmer a figure of national prominence.

CORE members were active in direct-action campaigns from San Francisco to tiny parishes in Louisiana. They gave their time and talents; some gave their lives. Michael Schwerner, a white CORE member, and James Chaney, a black CORE field worker, along with Andrew Goodman, a white Mississippi Summer Project volunteer, disappeared after being arrested in Neshoba County, Mississippi, in the summer of 1964. Farmer went there the following day to confront their probable murderers, the local sheriff and his deputy, and stared at them in hopeless fury: "I was not Christ. I was not Gandhi. I was not King. I wanted to kill those men—not with bullets, but with my fingers around their throats. . . . "

The great paradox of the civil rights movement was that the more victories it achieved, the more it revealed the pervasive racism of the country, and the greater grew the anger and frustration of its own adherents. In Gandhi's model, the nonviolent protester was supposed to convert the violent oppressor; in America in the 1960s, it often worked the other way, to the detriment of the civil rights movement. "The boundless energies of the CORE movement," Farmer writes, "unable to zero in on a clearly defined enemy, focused instead on itself, and we devoured each other. Factions and caucuses multiplied. Minor differences . . . on tactics became major political issues. . . . " A growing nationalist fervor among blacks in CORE led to the eventual expulsion of the group's white members, including some who had dedicated themselves to CORE since its founding in 1942.

The book's last chapters convey the sense of a life winding down: the organization Farmer had led was in disarray (and one of the few problems with *Lay Bare the Heart* is Farmer's silence on the subsequent decline of CORE under Roy Innis's leadership); his wife died; his health declined. This is not an "inspirational" book, like some of the biographies written of King. King died at the height of his powers and influence. Farmer outlived his historical moment. He had a calling as a young

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man, spent many years in the wilderness, and then enjoyed three or four very good years fighting a very good fight. That may not seem like much, but it was long enough for Farmer to see the end of the Southern Jim Crow system, and to know that he had something to do with its demise.

MONTGOMERY, as Lawrence Reddick observed in *Dissent*, was an interesting city in 1956. Aldon D. Morris argues that it was also well-organized, in its black community as well as its white one. Morris, a sociologist at the University of Michigan, has written an important, combative book, which takes issue with theorists of social movements from Max Weber to Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward. *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* also neatly complements Farmer's autobiography: Farmer describes his own experiences as a leader in a national, Northern-based, interracial civil rights group, while Morris's focus is on local, Southern, black communities and the black civil rights groups they created.

Morris challenges the notion that the civil rights movement was a sudden and unprecedented development, called into existence through the fortuitous combination of Rosa Parks's tired feet and Martin Luther King's inspired oratory:

> Who was Rosa Parks? Most accounts, consistent with the view that social movements arise spontaneously, describe Mrs. Parks as a quiet dignified older lady who, on that fateful day, spontaneously refused to move from her seat because she "had had enough" and was tired after a long hard day at work. This account is as mistaken as it is popular. Mrs. Parks was deeply rooted in the black protest tradition.

Rosa Parks had been secretary of the local NAACP chapter since 1945. She had founded and served as the adult adviser to the local NAACP Youth Council. And she had a long history of personal resistance to segregation. During World War II she was once thrown off a city bus for objecting to segregated seating, and in a fitting coincidence, the same bus driver who ejected her the first time had her arrested in 1955.

Morris's thesis is, simply put, that you can't make something out of nothing. His book is a paean to the mailing list and the mimeograph machine, and to the organizers who know how to make the best use of them. Hard times and oppression in and of themselves do not lead people to risk their livelihoods and safety by joining radical movements (and given the context of its time and place, no movement was ever more radical than the civil rights movement). People need to learn how to organize, need to learn that they can organize, before they can challenge injustice. "Internal organization," Morris argues, "was the critical factor that enabled the [civil rights] movement to gather momentum. . . ."

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The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement begins, not with Montgomery, as one might expect, but with an account of the little known Baton Rouge bus boycott of 1953, which served as inspiration and as a model for the better known effort led by Martin Luther King. Black ministerial associations, the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the NAACP and, later, the SCLC were links in an organizational chain that stretched from Baton Rouge in 1953 to Montgomery in 1955 to Greensboro and Nashville in 1960. In contrast to those historians who celebrate spontaneity and argue that organization smothers the initiative of rank-and-file protest, Morris insists that "the civil rights movement grew out of the conscious and deliberate efforts of organizers who understood the organizational nature and capacity of black society." Martin Luther King is an important figure in Morris's book, but no more so than a number of other key local and national organizers, including E. D. Nixon, Ella Baker, Fred Shuttlesworth, and Bayard Rustin.

Morris's search for the origins of the civil rights movement led him to an emphasis on local communities, a necessary corrective to popular misconceptions about the movement. At some points, however, his localism becomes too all-encompassing. Blacks in Montgomery, Greensboro, and Birmingham were living in the United States as well as in their local communities. Yet there is very little sense in Morris's book of how changes in the larger national political climate affected those local struggles in the late 1950s and early '60s.

Morris argues that studies of "resource mobilization" in the civil rights movement have laid too heavy a stress on the role of "outside elites," specifically Northern white liberal donors: "My research demonstrates that the overwhelming majority of local movements were indigenously organized and financed." That puts the question too narrowly. Didn't it make a difference to the black rank and file of the movement in those Southern communities that they had "friends" in the North and, most important, after 1960 a "friend" in the White House? That Kennedy's commitment to civil rights was largely symbolic, and undermined by his appeasement of powerful white Southern politicians, is easy to demonstrate. But I suspect the perception of Kennedy's sympathy to civil rights was as important to the success of the SCLC

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in Birmingham in 1963 as the perception of Roosevelt's sympathy for organized labor had been to the success of CIO organizers in the late 1930s.

"We are all indebted to the Negroes of Montgomery," Lawrence Reddick wrote in *Dissent* in 1956. That debt has not diminished in the intervening decades, nor has the debt owed to such individuals as James Farmer, who fought lonely battles to keep alive the spirit of radical egalitarianism in a dark time. *Lay Bare the Heart* and *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* remind us that, although the wheels of political change turn slowly, still they turn. □

Jim Sleeper

Embattled Ethnics

CANARSIE: THE JEWS AND ITALIANS OF BROOKLYN AGAINST LIBERALISM, by Jonathan Rieder. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 290 pp. $22.50.

> Hey, Yale kid, you know who writes books? Liars and squealers. Throw the books out the window, get out on the streets and learn something!
>
> — *Brooklyn Democratic boss Meade Esposito to Jonathan Rieder*

Neither liar nor squealer, Jonathan Rieder is something perhaps equally problematic in this book: an ethnographer with an argument, reaching for readers politically engaged. "Any coalition that fails to understand the grievances that collected in places like Canarsie all across America in the past two decades will achieve neither justice nor incumbency," he warns. The question isn't whether one agrees with that warning, as I do, or whether the canons of classical sociology permit him to issue it, as I think they do, but whether the method he uses to flesh out his warning succeeds as well as more literary, historical, journalistic, or intellectually rigorous methods might. I don't think it does, but it deserves serious attention all the same.

The book's central message is that many conservative, racist Italian and Jewish Americans in lower-middle-class urban neighborhoods weren't always that way; nor were they simply lured by greed or beguiled by political hucksters away from lunchpail liberalism into reactionary bigotry. Perhaps more ominously, they were shoved in that direction by the crime and social disintegration attributed to encroaching poor blacks and Puerto Ricans, and by what they feel is a rigid, often naive illogic of redistribution imposed upon them by liberal social engineering and jurisprudence through busing and "scatter site" and "fair" housing initiatives.

In Canarsians' experience, minority crime and government interventions in their neighborhood turf constitute extortions of gains they won by following the strict discipline of an upward mobility to which most of them had been ready to help admit blacks until at least the mid-1960s. That these "extortions" reached their peak just when inflation and new configurations of investment were undermining upward mobility itself compounded their desperation; but the fact remains that, as Rieder puts it, genuine "indignation, an emotion born of the perception of injustice" done them by both minorities and governing elites, lies at the heart of their transformation.

Of that injustice there can be no question, and one needn't minimize black and Hispanic suffering to say so. Reading these accounts, one wonders how so many on the left could have forgotten what is after all a central socialist tenet—that in a capitalist society, the amelioration of the plight of the poor is often accomplished at the expense of the next most vulnerable stratum, here the first-time homeowners in trade unions and the petty bourgeoisie.

In *Canarsie* we encounter World War II veterans who'd refused to vacate the back seats of public buses while in basic training in the South because "We're from New York and we don't know from Negroes in the back of the bus." We meet once-radical Jewish women who'd worked for the Scottsboro Boys and stayed on defiantly in racially "tipped" public housing projects in Brooklyn. Then we learn of the war vets' wives mugged several times by young blacks, and of those once-radical women assaulted by black girls in their projects' laundromats. They tell how feelings of betrayal and bitterness grew uneasily but ineradicably in their hearts, winning inner dialogues with statements like: "It's a physical reality. You have to protect your body and your children."

We learn, too, how the move to homeownership plunged many Canarsians so deep into debt that any property devaluation would foreclose modest retirement and medical care. We watch even those

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with no visceral objection to a black family moving next door join neighbors to forestall a stampede that could destroy their future security. The past, too, has been torn from them: discreetly, second-hand, we learn of the private yet widely shared experience of weeping unaffectedly in a car during a visit to "the old neighborhood," now devastated, a part of the visitor devastated, too.

Canarsians distinguish, with pride and muted shame, between the welfare that let their immigrant families get back on their feet after a father's death, and the welfare that seems to penalize working and sustain dependency on monthly payments nearly as large as what Canarsians take home after paying taxes to support the dependents living nearby. They tell us that such dependency offends not only their selfishness but, in some cases, their fading socialist vision of a collective to which all contribute. Yes, some Canarsians have heard of structural unemployment; but Rieder tells us that they've also seen the long lines outside ghetto liquor stores on welfare check-cashing days. (They have also seen the modest new Brownsville homes developed recently by working-poor minority people in the East Brooklyn Churches' "Nehemiah" housing program, and EBC's successes at closing local "smoke" shops, and I wonder whether that gives them pause.)

By the time school integration comes to Canarsie in 1973 through mandates from on high, we understand them when they say, "And now they're coming for my kid." We comprehend the spectacle of middle-aged Jewish men beating picketers (some undoubtedly also Jewish) from Youth Against War and Fascism, who've come out to Canarsie to "smash racism" during the 1974 school boycott. What distinguishes these men's rage from across-the-board reactionary ideology or the "blood" racism of Nazis and the Klan is its focus against specific, wrenching interventions in their own neighborhood turf—or, at the workplace, against directives that affront their notions of fairness and merit. The "perceptions of injustice" fueling their indignation may not always be accurate; but neither are the values they believe have been affronted always invalid.

Busing and the siting of low-income projects in middle-class housing markets, for example, are seldom fair or even efficient means to real social integration when they're imposed by distant elites who are doing nothing to provide poor minorities with educational and work opportunities that might nurture aspiration and disciplined effort where they are now. Yes, interracial unity may be necessary to win such advancement, for minorities and whites alike, but integrated *living* in capitalist neighborhood housing is more likely to come about as a result of other advancements under way than to be their cause.

Not all the painful ironies in *Canarsie* pertain to Jews. Rieder's observations and citations make clear that the relative provincialism of family-centered Italians carries instructive contradictions, too. Southern Italian peasant traditions may not nurture the same leaps of moral imagination, the same penchant for thinking by analogy and abstraction that temper Jewish self-interest; but their counteremphasis on physical rough justice and cunning helps Italians stand fast in neighborhoods that Jews are often first to flee. Talmudic virtuosity, in fact, often serves reactionary Jews quite as nicely as their liberal critics in debates over strategies of neighborhood preservation; residues of Italian peasant earthiness, by contrast, sometimes foster visceral sympathy with individual blacks, who are more likely to work as peers with Italians than with Jews.

Some readers may have to work a bit to extract these insights from the bewildering thicket of the book's sociological generalities. "I have let [Canarsians] tell much of the story in their own words," Rieder claims, "and I have kept my own theoretical preoccupations in the background." He has, and he hasn't. Canarsians do speak extensively, thoughtfully, sometimes eloquently in this book; yet their observations are hobbled, almost paragraph for paragraph, by the repetitive, doting generalizations of a sociology that tends to stage-manage their entrances and exits.

Not only can these struggling lower-middle-class Italian and Jewish Brooklynites "tell" their own stories; to an extent that might surprise both their celebrants and detractors, many of them can evaluate their experiences with a wit and sophistication drawn from traditions sometimes at odds with immediate impulses and from a more than passing acquaintance with the Enlightenment itself. To be sure, some of what they say and do is ugly and dispiriting. But they are often inquisitive and insightful. All they need is an editor to help them overcome precisely their central frustration of not being listened to, understood, and—what would surely come from letting them speak more for themselves—respected.

The problem is that *Canarsie* is Rieder's doctoral dissertation, pruned for the trade market of its methodological preoccupations but not of its overweening analysis, which too often gilds the native lily. Better by far are his more literary summaries

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at the ends of chapters, like this one of Jews' and Italians' differing reactions to dispossession by liberal state interventions:

> . . . Italians warned against the threat with unembarrassed candor. They did not so often apologize for seeming mean and unenlightened. Puzzled by the tenacity of Jewish liberalism, the Italians railed against it from across a vast divide, as if liberalism were a strange poltergeist. For Jews it could not be so simple. They were wrestling with a buried part of their past that seemed to have turned against them, or with the live pressures of parents and rich relatives on the West Side of Manhattan, on the campuses, in the Great Neck suburbs. A simple coding of responses misses the caveats, the little hesitations, the tortuous reasoning in the Jewish search for an appropriate political idiom.

This is good writing, and had its point not been made before several times, it would be more welcome than one feels it to be. A troubling omission—given the fairly extensive discussion of politics through Reagan's 1980 election and also of the earlier trials of John Lindsay in Canarsie—is the absence of a single reference to Mayor Ed Koch, who is surely the political embodiment of Canarsians' grievances and hopes. I can't imagine that the intended national appeal of the book would have been compromised by a study of this complex political relationship.

Canarsie carries, despite all its faults, though, an important message for anyone who professed surprise at the breadth of support for subway vigilante Bernhard Goetz or who attributed that support to racial bigotry alone. The book should be read by all who speak of racism abstractly as a pivot of an oppressive political economy yet never seem to find time to understand, in human terms, how racism works its way into the lives of people whose positive social aspirations triumph daily over their afflictions in so many dimensions of family, neighborhood, and work life.

Canarsie suggests that whatever the great structural bases of our discontents, the prospect of a decent American society depends less on the visionary solidarities invoked by some on the left than on the more modest ability of self-described "middle-of-the-road" working people to do two things: find some redress for their grievances against government mandates that impose abrupt changes on their neighborhood markets and schools, and find in themselves the strength to hear the racist agitators in their midst and respond, as many Canarsians still do, "That's bullshit." Without an understanding of these people, intimate and engaged, the left has no future in the United States.□

Gordon Beadle

The Old Church

THE AMERICAN POPE: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF FRANCIS CARDINAL SPELLMAN, by John Cooney. New York: Times Books. 327 pp. $19.95.

John Cooney's study of the life and times of Cardinal Spellman inevitably points to the liberating changes that have taken place within the American Catholic church. The stand taken by the American bishops in their pastoral letters on poverty and the nuclear arms race would have been unthinkable during the Spellman era. Cardinal O'Connor can never aspire to the level of political power and influence that Spellman once took for granted. The old reactionary church of Cardinal Spellman would seem, on the surface, to be as dead and buried as the Legion of Decency.

Cardinal Spellman was widely admired in conservative circles for his patriotism during World War II and the Vietnam era, but it was a patriotism rooted in a desire to link the fortunes of his church with the rising power and wealth of a new American empire. Like Senator Joseph McCarthy, whom he admired and supported, Spellman was a patriot who disliked the Constitution and distrusted the Bill of Rights. The doctrine of separation of church and state was a tiresome "shibboleth" he refused to recognize in his campaigns to secure American diplomatic recognition of the Vatican, state aid to Catholic schools, and federal money to promote the interests of his church in Europe, Asia, and South America. Like the Vatican of Pius XII, Spellman's model for the proper relationship between church and state was Franco's Spain, and he defended that regime with fervor.

JOHN COONEY INEVITABLY TAKES US BACK over the familiar ground of many of Spellman's public controversies. His undignified attack on Mrs. Roosevelt, his attempts to control the press, the ruthless handling of the Catholic gravediggers' strike of 1949, and the fanatical nature of his anticommunism are described at considerable length. But this is not to say that the biography is merely a rehash of the well-known events of Spellman's career. Cooney has made extensive use of personal interviews and has had access to Spellman's private

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diary and the FBI files that relate to events in which the Cardinal's role was only surmised or suspected. The results of his research will do little to further the present campaign to elevate Cardinal Spellman to sainthood.

It now seems almost certain that it was Spellman who pressured Mayor LaGuardia into rescinding Bertrand Russell's appointment to City College in 1940. Spellman was greatly admired by the public for his visits to the troops at the front during World War II. But in reality he was acting as President Roosevelt's "clandestine agent" and personal envoy in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East. No American cleric had ever been in such a position of power, and Spellman confidently expected to unite his church and nation in a worldwide crusade against communism. At first, Catholic and American interests seemed to coincide. The Truman administration and the Vatican spent large sums of money to defeat the Communists in the Italian election of 1948. The pope was reimbursed for the Vatican's share of the election expenses when Spellman negotiated an agreement with Secretary of State George Marshall that secretly "released large sums of 'black currency' in Italy to the Catholic Church." Public disclosure of the agreement might have cost Truman the presidential election of 1948.

Spellman supported Senator McCarthy's domestic Red-baiting campaigns. No proven anti-Communist regime was—in Spellman's eyes—too brutal or unpopular to be denied American support. He toured Latin America to publicly bestow his blessings on Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, Batista in Cuba, Stroessner in Paraguay, and Somoza in Nicaragua. He actively collaborated with the CIA in the plot that destroyed the reformist government of Arbenz in Guatemala and installed the dictatorship of Castillo Armas. Long before the fall of Dienbienphu, Spellman was calling for armed American intervention in Vietnam.

CARDINAL SPELLMAN'S FALL FROM POWER was probably inevitable, but it was ironic that the papacy and the first Catholic president of the United States should figure so prominently in his political demise. In 1960 Spellman supported Richard Nixon for the presidency. Joseph Kennedy, his longtime ally and benefactor, was furious. Jack Kennedy was confused. "Why is Spellman against me?" he asked. His campaign aide, Dave Powers, thoughtfully replied: "Right now Spellman is the most powerful Catholic. When you become president, you will be. He will have to move aside, and he doesn't want to." Throughout the campaign, Spellman and the conservative Catholic hierarchy, with the assistance of the Vatican, repeatedly attempted to embarrass Kennedy by tying him politically to his church. Kennedy wisely met the issue head on and retaliated after the election. Spellman and the Vatican representatives were deliberately snubbed and the new Administration drew the sharpest line between church and state of any presidency in modern times.

Spellman set his face firmly against all of the proposed innovations of Vatican II. He was privately contemptuous of John XXIII. "He's no pope," Spellman said to his aides. "He should be selling bananas." The Cardinal vowed that "no change will get past the Statue of Liberty." But Spellman and his conservative allies were eventually defeated on almost every issue.

Cardinal Spellman's fall from power was swift and humiliating. His ultrahawkish stand on the Vietnam War deprived him of influence in the Vatican of Paul VI and discredited him at home. Demonstrators against what had come to be known as "Spellman's War" followed him everywhere and even disrupted high mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Radical priests openly defied him and politicians soon discovered that the Cardinal's demands could be safely ignored. Spellman's "Last Hurrah" was a $2-million campaign to secure the passage of the proposed New York State Constitution of 1967, which would have provided state aid to Catholic schools. It was defeated at the polls by a margin of three to one. Spellman was finished as a political power, even in his own Archdiocese.

As John Cooney sees it, Spellman's death in 1969 marked "the end of an era" for the American Catholic church. Yet one senses a longing among conservative Catholics for the old authoritarian church of dogma and certainty that we tend to associate with Spellman. The present pope more closely resembles Spellman's mentor, Pius XII, than any of his immediate predecessors. Cardinal O'Connor is at present being compared to Spellman, in substance if not style. Conservative Catholics are making tentative political alliances with their old enemies, the southern fundamentalists. A serious ideological debate is taking place within the American Catholic church, and Mr. Cooney is to be congratulated for clarifying the political dimensions of that debate. □

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LETTERS

Reagan and *Ramparts*

Editors:

Bernard Rosenberg's diatribe against us [Summer 1985 issue] is unworthy of *Dissent*, both in its cavalier misrepresentation of the facts and its insufferably self-righteousness tone.

Our book on the Kennedys is not an encomium to Camelot, as Rosenberg claims, but was universally reviewed as a critical portrait of the Kennedy family and as a damning account of the Kennedy administration.

As editors of *Ramparts* from 1969 to 1973 we did not purvey "snippets of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist thought." Quite the opposite. We wrote and published harsh attacks on the new left's Marxist-Leninist-Maoists and their irresponsible and dangerous contempt for history and ideas (a tradition still kept alive by Abbie Hoffman and others). Far from being yippies then or yuppies now, as Rosenberg describes us, we have always regarded Abbie and Jerry as political clowns. Far from denigrating the venerable editor of *Dissent*, we respected him even in the '60s as the author of *Politics and the Novel*, and as a courageous anti-Stalinist on the left. The article in *Ramparts* by Paul Jacobs attacking Howe appeared under a previous regime, not in the days when we edited the magazine.

Most of what Rosenberg says about the new left is fair enough and we wouldn't disagree with it. Why then carp over a vote for Reagan when a vote for Mondale was a vote for the Democratic party and thus for all the political detritus of the '60s enshrined and legitimized in its whiny Jew- and America-baiting caucuses?

Peter Collier and David Horowitz
Los Angeles, Calif.

Bernard Rosenberg Replies

Writing from abroad, I am unable to check the assertions of Collier and Horowitz regarding their role on *Ramparts*. But what matters here is what they try to slide past in their concluding paragraph: these red-hot radicals of yesterday supported the most reactionary presidential candidate—Ronald Reagan—of the past half-century.

And what caused them to embrace everything they had previously rejected? Simple. It was the liberals. To vote for Mondale was to vote for the Democratic party, and therefore for the "political detritus" of the '60s. And what was so terrible about the Democratic party? Not Mondale's cautious retreat from social liberalism; no, it was those caucuses at the Democratic National Convention that enshrined, apparently, the old foolishness of Collier and Horowitz.

Not the campaign, not the issues, not the candidates—not Reagan's chipping away at the welfare state, or his military bluster, or his policy toward Nicaragua. No, it was those "Jew- and America-baiting caucuses." True, Jews were scared by Jesse Jackson's deplorable utterances; but not as much as by our Chief Magistrate's alliance with fanatical fundamentalists who demand a "Christian America." Which is why Jews voted in larger numbers than in 1980—Collier and Horowitz notwithstanding—for the Democratic candidate. And so did the blacks. What America-baiting are Collier and Horowitz talking about? Mario Cuomo's speech reasserting New Deal liberalism? Women pleading for equal rights and a candidate of their own gender?

But even if our correspondents could not bring themselves to vote for Mondale, that hardly justifies voting for Reagan—the darling of the union-busters, of the military machine, and of all who wish to roll back whatever progress has been made in this country these past few decades.

"Venerable Editor" Adds

Writing at home, and with the research help of Brian Morton, I add a few words about *Ramparts* during the time Collier and Horowitz were among its editors—from 1969 to 1973.

True, Horowitz did write sharp criticisms of the New Left's (or part of the New Left's) infatuation with left-authoritarian regimes. And true, some of the nastiest stuff in *Ramparts*, such as the piece by Paul Jacobs "exonerating" *Dissent* from "being CIA-connected," appeared "under a previous regime." So, credit where it's due.

But here are a few snippets from *Ramparts* during the Collier–Horowitz days:

- *December 1969*, Jerry Rubin (whom they now claim to have always regarded as "a political clown") wrote: "But then a Wonderful Thing Happened. Children were born. Children were born who got no bad vibes when we hear the name 'Stalin.'"
- *May 1970*, the cover features a picture of the burning of the Bank of America in Santa Barbara, with this caption: "The students who burned the Bank of America may have done more toward saving the environment than all the Teach-Ins put together." Inside, an unsigned editorial: "Burning a bank is not the same as putting the banks and their system out of business. To do that, millions of people in this country will first have to wake up to the real source of their misery. The action in Santa Barbara . . . might spark that awakening."
- *December 1970*, an encomium to Cuban dictator Fidel Castro by K. S. Karol: "Fidel invariably monopolizes conversations, not because he refuses to listen, but

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simply because he thinks aloud and likes to answer his own questions."

• *December 1970*, a piece on businessmen against the Vietnam War, concluding that "Many young people, black and white, have found that the system doesn't work for them, and that violence does. With no way open within the system [before, that is, you could vote for Reagan], violence has become the issue of the '70s."

In the *Washington Post* piece Rosenberg criticizes, Collier and Horowitz acknowledge they were guilty of admiration for, of all people, the Korean Comrade-Monarch Kim Il Sung. But Martin Luther King—him they declared to be an Uncle Tom.

Let our readers decide whether such items (there were others) justify Collier and Horowitz's description of *their* days at *Ramparts*. Foolish things could no doubt also be found in the youthful writings of some *Dissent* editors. But, if nothing else, we have tried to learn that it's really foolish to defend past foolishness.□

Reagan and Bitburg

Editors:

Let me add a briefer note to Irving Howe's brief note to David Bromwich's trenchant article on Reagan and Bitburg.

At the height of the uproar, and in the weeks that followed, a number of newspapers and magazines pointed out that—for the first time—Reagan's image, how he is perceived by the public, was slightly dented by the Bitburg blunders. His "teflon" surface was scratched. An article in the *New York Times* (April 19, 1985) suggested that it was Reagan's past life in the insular world of Hollywood that accounted for his ill-advised remarks. But now, some months later, it appears that Reagan's image wasn't marred, nor was his teflon armor chipped. But it is not his past life in Hollywood that is responsible for the lack of effect—it is his past *work* there.

President Reagan possesses a quality—doubtless, one he has always had—that ensured his success as a secondary lead in Hollywood films playing male ingenu roles, just as the same quality resulted in his lack of success playing villains. Reagan, almost alone among major politicians, projects to onlookers no signs of deviousness, or even of meanness. Jimmy Carter showed, at times, a pinched vindictiveness; Gerald Ford occasionally resembled the slow student who becomes darkly sullen when he is made aware he doesn't know something; and Richard Nixon projected—well, Richard Nixon.

But President Reagan reveals, at least publicly, not a glimmer of malevolence. His face seems, rather, to be hiding nothing, absolutely nothing, behind an affable mask: no deceit, no troubles, no doubts. And, therefore, Reagan might well be, ironically, the first American president who will look no older when he leaves office than when he began. Even when Reagan does get upset, he has the air of a grandfather starting to splutter at junior.

And as long as the public remains enchanted by Reagan's image, this eerie quality of absence, this utter lack of malice, they will continue to tolerate a successful grandfather-figure who makes hundreds of blunders and gaffes, as long as he makes them without any detectable wickedness, and as long as no catastrophes result. Bitburg fell far short of catastrophe; even the number of sleeping Marines killed in Beirut fell far short. The reasoning employed oddly reflects the logic of the libel laws, which—in the past—used to prohibit a public official from recovering damages unless he could prove that any falsehood published was printed with actual malice. Except, in President Reagan's case, it is a reversal of the logic: he is found not guilty by the public because no one can demonstrate—or even perceive—that he utters anything, anything at all, maliciously.

William O'Rourke
Notre Dame, Ind. □

"Feasible Socialism?"

I

Editors:

In "Feasible Socialism?" (*Dissent*, Summer 1985), Alex Nove offers a vision of socialism that is too drably practical to excite those who seek dramatic change, yet is not detailed enough to answer the more difficult questions of responsible reformers. The reader who turns to Nove's book (*The Economics of Feasible Socialism*, Winchester, Mass.: Allen & Unwin, Inc., 1983) for elaboration of the ideas discussed in the *Dissent* excerpt will be disappointed. Nove offers a brief critique of capitalism, but nowhere does he specify the values that socialism is intended to achieve, let alone offer an argument that the social arrangements he proposes are the best way to attain those objectives.

The weakest point in Nove's argument is the discussion of investment policy—that is, of the control of capital. Apparently, capital needs that cannot be met out of a firm's own resources would be supplied by the state banking system, since private banks and stock markets would not exist. But does this not involve a concentration of power in precisely the sort of centralized bureaucracy Nove finds unsatisfactory in almost every other economic sector? Do not his arguments for the merits of the market system—flexibility, decentralization, democratization—apply to the investment process? And where would cooperative and small-scale private enterprises get their initial capitalization, if not from the same state bureaucracy? Can we be assured

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that innovative entrepreneurs, like those who founded the Apple Computer company, would find support in this system as readily as they might in a system where private-venture capitalists are permitted to operate?

The legal restraints Nove proposes would inhibit the efficient functioning of the market process. Let us continue with the Apple Computer example. A small group of computer enthusiasts starts a small business. Its success almost immediately forces it to reorganize as a cooperative and, when it becomes too large to be cooperatively managed, as a socialized enterprise. How much time and effort would be wasted in dealing with government regulators, ever-growing stakeholder groups, and so on?

Certainly, social benefits could accrue through these organizational rearrangements. A cooperative or socialized enterprise would be less likely to close down a plant in California in order to have the work done in the Third World. Wages might be more equitably distributed. But there could also be an inhibition of the flexibility and creativity that is possible when an enterprise is controlled by entrepreneurs who don't have to spend their time in committee meetings. Perhaps the socially desirable goals could be accomplished by less restrictive measures, such as plant-closing legislation, tax penalties for undesirable corporate behavior, progressive taxation to redistribute income. If we can't make these more modest mechanisms operative, what makes us think we can make Nove's more ambitious proposals work?

The legal prohibitions proposed by Nove would inevitably be viewed as illegitimate, cumbersome, and unjust by a large segment of the population. All sorts of mechanisms would be used to evade them. Our efforts to prohibit alcohol, prostitution, narcotics, gambling, and other profitable enterprises have never been altogether successful. How effective would we be in keeping a small-scale privately owned restaurant from hiring too many dishwashers? The police forces required to impose such a system would be overwhelming.

Nove's system contains the potential for new lines of inequality. Who would get the secure jobs in state-owned enterprises and what workers would be left to their own initiative to form a cooperative or private enterprise? Would we tell the coal miners that they are free to organize their mine as a cooperative and divide up the profits? This opportunity would be attractive to those in rich mining areas, disastrous to those whose coal seams are less profitable (but perhaps still need to be worked in order to maintain adequate energy reserves).

Can we really trust the political system to make a fair allocation of resources between the centralized state corporations, state-owned enterprises, cooperative enterprises, and private enterprises? Or would we see a dual society emerging, where the well-educated and well-connected found jobs in the well-funded public sectors, subsidized by the taxes paid by those in the cooperative and private enterprises?

To implement Nove's system in an advanced capitalist country would involve nationalization of key industries, and socialization and collectivization of smaller businesses. These ideas were new and exciting 50 years ago, but today they seem outdated. Those nationalizations that did take place were often unsuccessful, for reasons Nove recognizes, and they are exemplified in the problems of England's nationalized coal mines. Does anyone really expect that the left can revive the Democratic or the Labour party with these ideas?

What is democratic socialism intended to accomplish? Presumably the goals are a society where inequality is limited to the minimum necessary to provide incentives, where the welfare of the least advantaged is assured, and a comfortable standard of living is provided for all. Where full political and human rights are protected, all social groups are treated equally, the environment is protected, and peaceful relations are maintained with other nations. These goals, not the specific institutional patterns used to achieve them, must be the foundation of any socialist utopia.

If we look around the world, there is no question that the social democratic nations such as Sweden, Norway, Austria, and Finland come the closest to achieving the democratic socialist utopia. They do so with mixed economies balanced by strong labor movements and democratic political institutions. The difficulties of achieving such a system in racially and ethnically heterogeneous societies such as the United States are well known, but they pale into insignificance compared with the problems of implementing a model such as Nove presents.

Ted Goertzel
Camden, N.J.

II

Editors:

Two (related) comments in Alec Nove's stimulating discussion on "feasible socialism" (*Dissent*, Summer 1985) have elicited this response. He argues that the distinction between productive and nonproductive labor "would plainly be inappropriate for a socialist economy." On the contrary, the distinction would definitely be in order, for an entirely different reason of social import, in a planned, socialist society, one in which "all socially useful labor" would be honored. To provide a host of significant social services (such as health delivery, research in the arts and sciences, education, cultural activities), the production of material goods—producers' as well as consumers' goods—will have to be most carefully planned. Plainly, the concern will no longer be to ascertain the degree of exploitation but to ensure a humanistic relation between the production of goods and of services.

A related confusion is manifest in Nove's comment about the "metaphysical" point in determining whether a gift of nature has value. Adam Smith made the valid distinction, accepted and amplified by Marx, between use-value and value (or its manifestation as exchange value). Use-value, a necessary component of anything produced for sale or for use, bears no relation to economic value. Obviously, some "gifts of nature" have

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extraordinary use-value, but have no material value: the beauty of a sunset, unpolluted air, resources *in situ*, rainfall, *ad infinitum*. By the way, in capitalist society many use-values that have no value are treated as if they are possessed of that economic reality; even love. In a rational society value may disappear, ultimately, but use-value will remain. Paradoxically, the term then will no longer be relevant.

Nove does accept the proven Marxist thesis that *only* labor produces value, but mistakenly assumes that scarcity and time—both important considerations in production—are also productive. If he thinks Marx was mistaken he should say so.

These criticisms do not alter my overview of Nove's superb contribution to the ongoing discussion about what a socialist economy might be, or ought to be.

ALBERT PRAGO
Rhinebeck, N.Y.

III

Editors:

Dissent deserves praise for devoting 24 pages to major segments of Alec Nove's lucid and stimulating book, *The Economics of Feasible Socialism*. On the whole, his proposed system of liberal socialism is plausible, sound, and satisfying. Unfortunately, there is no explanation that very similar schemes of liberal or market socialism were presented with more sophistication and greater detail by several socialists in the 1930s and 1940s. I refer to the books and articles published by Eduard Heimann, E. F. M. Durbin, Carl Landauer, Oskar Lange, A. P. Lerner, R. L. Hall, H. D. Dickinson, B. E. Lippincott, J. A. Schumpeter, and others. For an annotated bibliography, see my treatise, *Liberal Socialism* (1974).

Price theory is the heart of economic theory. In your segments of *Feasible Socialism*, Nove merely explains that socialist prices should "balance supply and demand, [and] reflect cost and use-value" (p. 367). This ignores such vital issues as whether prices should measure average or marginal costs, which usually differ widely, and how either average or marginal cost should be determined. A. P. Lerner clarified these issues in five journal articles, in the years 1934–37, and in his book, *The Economics of Control* (1944). I could cite several other cases in which basic problems of liberal socialist economic theory were treated more fully and more competently by these pioneers than by Nove.

Perhaps the chief novelty of *Feasible Socialism* is its treatment of producers' cooperatives as essential forms of socialist organization. I began my adult life with a very favorable attitude toward co-ops and have belonged to several, but in 60 years of observation I have seen very little evidence that they offer much hope for the future. Co-ops cannot compete successfully with large corporations under capitalism, and they have fared badly in communist countries. Members of producers' co-ops have strong incentives to reduce output, raise prices, increase wage rates, and exclude new members. Yugoslavia, the land of producers' co-ops, has long suffered from mass unemployment and emigration of workers because its co-ops could not provide enough jobs.

I also question Nove's stress on the need for central government planning "of major investments of structural significance" (p. 377). I think investments should be planned by local units of socialist firms and state agencies because these are closer to the local scene and more familiar with the prices and costs of individual goods. The national government should control ony the rate of national savings and the allocation of capital funds. It should not plan the local physical investment of such funds.

Nove virtually ignores the problem of which goods should be sold for a price and which should be free. I estimate that 30 to 50 percent of all goods should be free goods in a liberal socialist economy; but the Chinese and Soviet practice of providing housing as a virtually free good is very uneconomic. Socialists need a sound and detailed theory of free or communist distribution, but Nove offers no such theory.

Finally, any theory of feasible socialism should include at least the basic principles of ideal socialist city planning. Nove offers none. All capitalist cities must be completely rebuilt to enable people to live in small, stable, self-sufficient urban communities where people can become well-acquainted and can easily walk or cycle to jobs, offices, shops, clinics, and so on. And no well-planned city should expand beyond its stipulated size. Competition between small, unstable firms producing the same goods, recommended by Nove, is incompatible with such urban planning and life. No firm should ever fail and discharge its workers. It should merely change its prices and/or its product mix. For an elaboration of these points, see my book, *Liberal Socialism Applied* (1978), pp. 43–105.

B. P. BECKWITH
Palo Alto, Calif.

ALEC NOVE Replies

Criticism is indeed called for. A full reply would require another book. All I can do is try briefly to justify, where possible, my position.

• First, to Ted Goertzel. He holds that I am "too drably practical," and at the same time not practical enough. Yes, in my "model" those who wish to borrow for financing capital investment would have to apply for credit to the state banking system. What alternative does he suggest that would qualify as "socialist"? Private banks?

Perhaps I should modify and extend borrowing possibilities by enabling firms to borrow from each other, and in today's Hungary firms can issue bonds, purchasable by other enterprises and even individuals, which bear an interest rate but give no right of control over the borrowing institutions. Of course, there could be several competing state-owned banks (as in France), so the

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borrower need not be faced with a "centralized bureaucracy." There clearly, however, must be some control over the general level of borrowing, or inflation and imbalances would surely become dangerous. Anyhow, if even major issues of investment strategy are not within the purview of the central planners, they would have no function whatever. Is Goertzel in favor of unfettered private enterprise? It is a defensible position, but it is a nonsocialist (if not an antisocialist) one.

Yes, even some Hungarian colleagues criticized me for laying down limits too narrow for private enterprise. I asked them, as I now ask Goertzel: Should there not be some limits, if one is seeking to define a feasible *socialism?* An alternative is to allow free and unfettered competition between the socialized and private sectors, with no limits at all, so that (to take Goertzel's example) if Apple Computer is a brilliant success and becomes a giant company, this should not call for any change in its status. Yet even classic capitalist countries made a legal distinction between private and public companies, and had antitrust laws.

One could envisage laws turning the brilliant entrepreneur who outgrows "private" status into the managing director of an enterprise that now has an elected workers' council, which would doubtless be happy to support, and share in, success. I agree that this is a controversial area. One Hungarian critic actually argued that either one should ban private enterprise altogether or, if it were to be allowed, subject it to no limits at all. Since he was a man of the "left," he was not altogether happy with the implications of his own position.

The limits I suggested would *not* require the police to prevent a restaurant from "hiring too many dishwashers." It would, however, give the dishwashers (and the rest of the work force) in a very large restaurant (employing, for instance, 100 or so persons) some rights to participate, elect a council, and so on. This and the change in property status might cause some small entrepreneurs to refrain from growing—which is the consequence of imposing any limit. What would be Goertzel's way out?

Goertzel speaks of "new lines of inequality." One example he gives is, in theory, extremely easy to remedy. Obviously, those working a "rich mine," or exceptionally fertile land, would be subject to a rental payment; otherwise a quite undeserved degree of income differentiation would obtain. His vision of a "dual society" surprises me. People differ. Some prefer to take civil-service jobs, some even join the Grenadier Guards, others join kibbutzim, still others try to run a small car-repair firm or teach children to play the violin. Some like security and routine, others prefer risk and adventure. It is not a "dual" but a multiple society that is surely wanted. Finally, he believes that such countries as Sweden come closest to realizing a democratic socialist program in the actual world of today. I agree. But is Sweden the realization of socialism, or even of a "socialist utopia" [*sic*]? I doubt if Swedish socialists would go so far, much though I admire the Scandinavian achievements.

• Albert Prago argues that "use-value . . . bears no relation to economic value." I disagree. It is not good enough to say that something must be useful if it is to have value. It can also be more or less useful and more, or less, scarce. Only labor produces value, in the sense that shareholders and landlords do not: ownership as such—that is, allowing someone else to work—is not productive, for a socialist.

Land (not the landlord, the *land*) is, however, for all practical purposes productive, scarce, and *has* value. On productive and unproductive labor there is a huge literature, stretching back to the 18th century or possibly even to Aristotle. Of course, in any society labor is used for a variety of different purposes: to provide cabbages, shoes, ships, computers, chess boards, drugstores, the services of repairs, hairdressing, teaching, bookkeeping, post offices, orchestras. . . . To draw a line somewhere between "productive" and "unproductive" seems, to me, a rather unproductive activity, so long as we are speaking of "socially useful labor."

• If Beckwith had read my book, he would have seen an analysis of the ideas of Oskar Lange, and also of the more recent ones of Ota Šik. But I could and should have devoted more space to, for example, Lerner and Dickinson.

On investment and the role of central control, my fear is that (for reasons discussed in my book) local authorities would disrupt interregional links and obstruct desirable forms of specialization, precisely because of their commitment to *local* needs. (The Yugoslav experience is sadly relevant here.) Suppose that, for good geographical-locational reasons, the steel works, oil industry, and coal mines of a given country are located in its north-east corner. Is it really sensible to envisage their development as being under the full control of "their" region?

Finally, what should be distributed free in any model of socialism depends on what the bulk of the population want. Obviously, the more free goods there are, the smaller is the sum available for each family to spend as personal income. Preferences vary. It is not evading the issue to insist that this is a matter for genuine democratic discussion and decision. □

On "A Letter from Europe"

Editors:

With breathtaking glibness, Erazim Kohák, in his "A Letter from Europe" (Fall 1985), brushes aside the painful lessons of the history of that subcontinent in this century and advocates a return to isolationism. Mr. Kohák proposes that Soviet forces be withdrawn from Eastern Germany and United States forces from Western Germany. Without the Soviet Group of Forces in Eastern Germany, Germany would speedily be reunited. Surely Mr. Kohák cannot believe that the Soviets will voluntarily withdraw their forces from

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Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. To do so would risk the loss of the whole northern tier of the *cordon Stalinaire.*

Since 1945, however, we have had one demonstration after another of Soviet determination to maintain that buffer zone at nearly any cost. But Mr. Kohák fails to tell us why he believes the Soviets would sacrifice the benefits they derive from the creation of a separate East German state, the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and from their successful insistence that the Polish opposition movement of 1980–81 be put down. In lieu of the unattainable peace treaty, they have the Helsinki Final Act, in which all the states of Europe, West and East (excepting only Albania), together with the United States and Canada, agreed to recognize the de facto post–1945 boundaries of Europe.

Even if a peace treaty provided for the withdrawal of Soviet troops behind the borders of the U.S.S.R., they would still be poised only 500 land miles from Berlin, while U.S. troops would be more than 5,000 miles away by air or sea. If the U.S.S.R. were "provoked" by a real or alleged German revanchism to reoccupy Central Europe, Mr. Kohák can hardly imagine that, in the age of nuclear warfare, U.S. troops would then be able to regain a foothold in Europe. Leaving Europe "to work out its own salvation" in those circumstances could lead to only one outcome: not finlandization, but subjugation.

The signatories of the Charter–77 document to which Mr. Kohák refers of course called for the withdrawal of all foreign armies from Europe. Since they are Czechoslovak citizens under constant secret-police surveillance, it would have been impolitic if, in this document addressed to a West European audience, they had only demanded what I do not doubt is foremost in their desires: the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Czechoslovakia. If he could put himself in their shoes, Mr. Kohák would recognize, I feel sure, that the last thing those intrepid people want is the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Europe. In this, they are at one with their fellow oppositionists in Poland and the rest of East-Central and Eastern Europe, for whom such a withdrawal would spell the beginning of a new and even blacker night of the soul than that through which they now so painfully grope their way.

R. T. Davies
U.S. Foreign Service (retired),
Ambassador to Poland 1973–78

Erazim Kohák Replies

Ambassador Davies restates forcefully and cogently the reasoning that led American (and Soviet) policy in Europe into its current impasse. That impasse, however, is just the problem. For central Europe, it holds out the prospect of an indefinite foreign occupation, for the divided Europe at large a prospect of a chronic confrontation ever threatening to erupt into the unthinkable. The advocates of a "Central European solution"—interposing a genuinely neutral central Europe between the power blocs—are not calling on the U.S. to retreat into isolation but to explore imaginative new alternatives. It worked in Austria, where the Soviets recognized the advantages of a neutral buffer over an occupied one. Given the paralyzing failure of the present policy, it is surely worthwhile to explore the possibility of extending the Austrian solution to all of central Europe.

As for the central Europeans themselves, be they Poles, Germans, Czechs, or Austrians, though they would clearly prefer an American occupation to a Soviet one, I believe, as a central European myself, that most of them would prefer self-determination to either.

I regret the impression of glibness, produced by compression, and hope to return to the topic at length in a future issue. □

Death

Editors:

Brian Morton's "Death of a Veteran" (*Dissent*, Summer 1985) struck me as an unusual choice for *Dissent*, because it seemed such a personal reaction to his father's death. But days after I had read it I found my mind coming back to it. If Morton's reaction appeared so personal—why should I be worrying about it?

It strikes me that perhaps people who grow up in radical or atheist homes find it possible to postpone their philosophical-psychological reconciliation with death until they are bowled over by a personal experience. As the product of two generations of Congregational missionaries, that was one of the issues I had to deal with, at least in a preliminary way, when I decided as a freshman in college that there is no God, ergo no hereafter. At about the same time I also was convinced by Sinclair Lewis's *Arrowsmith* that the scientific method was the most likely way to sort out reality from its alternatives and, by all that I had read and observed, that socialism was the best hope for humanity. Since there appeared to be scant scientific evidence for reincarnation, I did not turn to it or other notions that are consoling when we are faced with death.

Morton accuses the socialist tradition of "a lack of sobriety about death." Rather, I think it's more that the socialist tradition takes seriously its emphasis on society's contribution to each of us as an individual and, connected with that, the judgment that our individual worth is directly related to our contribution to society. (To me that means to society at large, or to society as our family, neighborhood, church, school, and so on.) Each of our lives has been immeasurably enhanced by the great music, art, architecture, literature, techno-

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logical development, and social struggles of the past. That heritage makes our lives other than brutish. Why then should we mourn inconsolably when any one of us goes where all the creators of our social heritage have gone before?

One of the tensions between some older socialists and our comrades who grew up in the New Left tradition of the '60s is the latter's emphasis on the individual's perceived needs and feelings as a major concern of the political collective. This partly explains their preference for consensus vs. majority decision-making; participatory vs. representative democracy; process vs. result orientation in social and political activity. All this tends to shift the society/individual equation toward the individual.

It's true, I had to give up the idea that my life would only be worthwhile if I left the world a better place than I had found it. At some point I realized that independent variables were quite likely to outweigh my personal efforts. What a relief! The best we can do is to contribute our mite, while getting some fun out of it while we're here. Socialist politics, even in this country, can include solid achievements along with frustrations and disappointments. Fighting the good fight, with good comrades and plenty of laughs along the way—that is its own reward.

We all need psychic crutches to bolster our rational convictions. Where death is concerned, I early on found a comforting litany in the Great Bard's words in *Julius Caesar*, and I have never been able to improve on them:

> Cowards die many times before their deaths;
> The valiant never taste of death but once.
> Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
> It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
> Seeing that death, a necessary end,
> Will come when it will come.

GORDON HASKELL
San Francisco, Calif. □

To Activists in Social Change . . .

Editors:

I am putting together a book of personal stories by people who are acting alone or in small nonstructured groups to effect social change, and I would like to hear from anyone who is taking an active stand in the areas of nuclear weapons, hunger, environmental issues (eco-saboteurs especially), or women's, minorities', gays', and workers' rights. Stories are welcome on other social issues as well, and can also describe the efforts of someone other than yourself whose story you feel should be told.

The main thesis of the book is that confrontational politics on a small scale is the path to real social change, that individual acts of courage are the proper and necessary response to a political system that is no longer representative of people's needs. My feeling is that thousands of these acts of courage occur every day.

I encourage anyone who is personally involved in a struggle for social change to write and tell me about your experiences.

DONALD CURRIE
4006 25th Street
San Francisco, Calif. 94114 □

To Our Contributors:

A few suggestions:

(1) Be sure to keep a copy of your ms—the mails aren't always reliable. And please remember that we can't return articles unless they're accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

(2) Please don't write to ask whether we're interested in such and such an article—it makes for useless correspondence. Look at our last few issues to see if your idea fits in. Or take a chance and send us your article.

(3) Type your ms *double-spaced*, with *wide* margins. Check all your figures, dates, names, etc.—they're the author's responsibility.

(4) Notes and footnotes should also be typed double-spaced, on a *separate* sheet. As we're not an academic journal, we prefer that they, wherever possible, be dropped altogether or worked into the text.

(5) We're usually quick in giving editorial decisions. If there's a delay, it's because a few editors are reading your article.

(6) Please bear with us—we have accumulated quite a backlog of material, and you may have to wait for a few issues before you see your article in print.

THE EDITORS □

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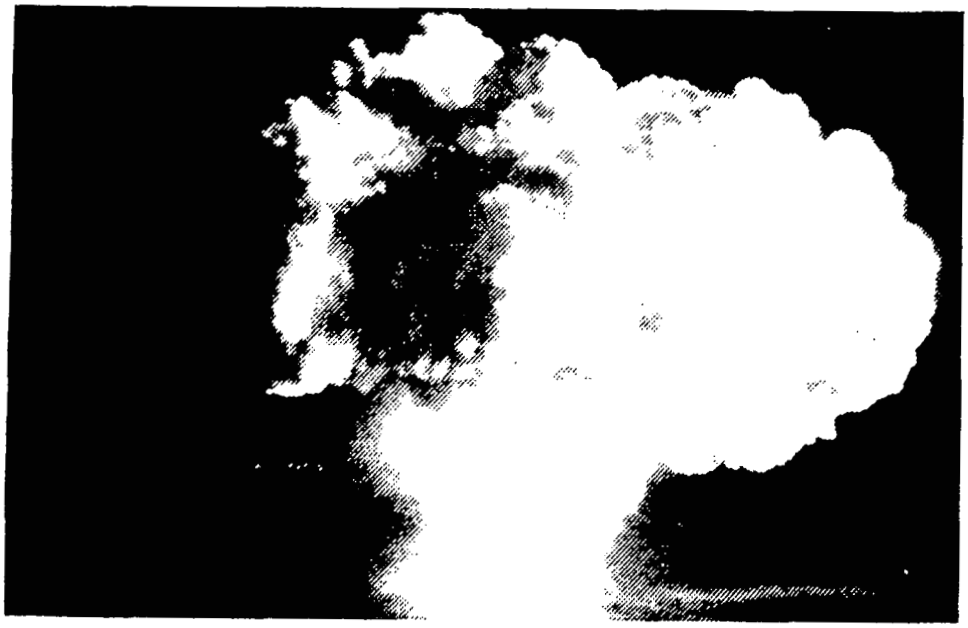

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